

Education Commission Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2009

In Attendance: Jane Carroll (Staff Member), Pat Bredenkamp (Staff Member), Katie Gebhard (Staff Member), Tom Nathe, Mary Powell, Sherry Campeau, Lisa Zastoupil

Absent: Mary Zielinski

Visitors:

Electronic handouts distributed prior to the meeting: October 2009 Faith Formation Report, October 2009 Principal's Report, Ministry Fair Information, Archdiocesan Planning Process.

1. Meeting called to order at 7:20 pm
2. September meeting minutes approved via email.
3. Planning for the year: What do we want to accomplish?
Discussion and review of items in the Education Commission Action Plan that can be accomplished this year. Highlights of topics discussed were...

Katie has a theme and a speaker identified for a Parish Mission Feb 21, 22, and 23 2010. The theme will be "Discipleship with Stewardship".

The current school website is going on 2 years old. A website refresh is planned for the 2009-2010 school year.

Epiphany has a marketing plan that will work on getting the word out about Epiphany.

Welcome Back for the "Holy Days" will be in March 2010.

4. Ministry Fair (November 14-15):
Members discussed staffing the Education Commission booth at the upcoming Ministry Fair as well as contacting organizations underneath the education commission umbrella. Staffing for hospitality was also discussed.
5. Advisory Committee Reports:
Lisa Zastoupil reported on the School Advisory Committee. Uniforms, School Marketing, and a Staff/Volunteer recognition program were discussed. Coffee with the Principal is also new this year.

Mary Powell reported on the Faith Formation advisory committee. Listening sessions regarding anything faith formation have been held, and a few more are planned.

November 17th there will be a meeting of people who left the church to understand reasons why they left. The meeting will be at Cub.

Registration for faith formation by families coming late was discussed. Nobody is turned away. Parents are given the option to home school if there is no room in a current class.

6. Commissions Planning Day, September 12
Father's vision regarding Epiphany will be shared with the commission at the November meeting.
7. Archdiocesan project: Key Facts about the Archdiocese
What are the implications of this data? Tabled for next meeting.
- 8 Faith Formation Report
See electronic Faith Formation Report.
Parenting Series will be presented Nov 5, 12, and 19th from 7-9pm. Topics covered are Prayer and Spirituality of Children, Parenting Teens, and Internet Safety. Meetings to be held in the meeting rooms
9. School Report
See electronic Principals Report
10. Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm

Next meeting: November 10, 2009

Principal's Report to the Education Commission **October 9, 2009**

October 3rd Marathon Update

We were blessed not to have pouring rain for our annual Marathon for Nonpublic Education. As of late yesterday, we are 72% of the way to our goal of \$60,000 and 60% of our way to our service goal. I will have an update for you at Tuesday's meeting. Because we've not met our goal, we are extending collections until Tuesday, October 20.

We've added several new things this year and I'd like to highlight a few successes:

- We've had a parent committee of about 10 volunteers who have done amazing work in coordinating this important fundraiser.
- Adding a service component has been a way to communicate an important school value to the larger community. Pictures of our families volunteering at the Pines are touching.
- We've had a Pep Rally weekly. They have been spirited and fun!
- We rewarded student team work rather than individual work.
- We created a web link to enhance communication about marathon with downloadable forms.
- Students made announcements at one weekend Mass in an effort to draw in the larger community.
- Parents and students were present at weekend coffee and donuts to make visible the Marathon.

"SMART" Technology

Using part of the \$100,000 donation the school received last year, we are installing 6 Smart Boards in classrooms in grades 6-8.

Fall Report to Minnesota Non-public School Accreditation Association (MNSAA)

Earlier this month we completed the annual fall accreditation report that includes:

- Basic enrollment information
- Annual member dues
- Verification of professional staff qualifications
- Verification with State and Federal legal requirements
- Signatures of compliance regarding MNSAA requirements

Accreditation Site Visit

The MNSAA organization relies on trained team leaders to chair site visits at member schools throughout the State. On October 27-29, I will be chairing a site visit at St. Hubert School in Chanhassen, MN. Mary Branca-Rosenow will be part of a team on November 10-11 at St. John's School, Hopkins.

Marketing News

The Marketing Committee has been busy implementing its detail action plan. Current activities include:

a November event for potential kindergarten students, creating an Epiphany School branding for publications, communications to parents and key stakeholders about the marketing plan, and features in community communications.

Communications

One of the responses to the need for increased communication is offering quarterly opportunities for conversations. The following announcement has been sent to parents:

“Coffee with the Principal” Join me for some eye-opening coffee, a sweet, and conversation on Tuesday, October 20th, from 7:45-8:45, Hearth Room. Quarterly, I’m hosting a gathering for parents to visit informally about the school, activities, and topics of interest in learning and parenting. Simply send me an email at jcarroll@epiphanymn.org to let me know you are coming, and I’ll have the coffee brewed.

Learning Social Skills

At Epiphany School, we are committed to “forming the whole person”. One of the important ways that we encourage emotional and social success is by direct teaching and reinforcement of key social skills. This year the faculty and staff are building social capacity by teaching sixteen essential skills: greeting others; following instructions; accepting feedback; getting a person’s attention; making an apology; accepting ‘no’ for an answer; accepting compliments; having a conversation; asking for help; asking for permission; staying on task; sharing something; working with others; listening; and using an appropriate voice tone.

Social skills are behaviors that enable individuals to build positive and productive relationships and contribute to doing well in school. Students come to school with a variety of skill levels. During their years at Epiphany, we want to make certain students have these essential social skills.

This fall teachers participated in specific training to teach and reinforce these skills.

Elective Offerings

We’re excited to announce that during October and November we’ll be offering an elective program in the junior high. An elective is an opportunity to explore interests, learn something new, and build relationships with peers and teachers. Electives mix up learning and add some spice to the regular curriculum. Each class will meet four times for one hour. Next week students will be given a list of more than 12 elective offerings and we hope to give students one of their first three choices. Our plan is to offer electives three times during the year.

October 2009 Faith Formation Education Commission Report

We are off to a great start. Right now we have about 720 children/teens registered in our various programs. About 170 of them were registered in the last 3 weeks – registration deadline was August 1. We are anticipating about 50 more for those celebrating the Sacraments of Reconciliation and/or Confirmation. Currently about 25 children/teens are being home schooled. A few have chosen that model while the others have it because they registered very late and we don't have enough catechists. Our high school program could still use a few catechists. We have 9 participating in the RCIA program

October brings the beginning of various youth ministry events plus our Sacramental Programs for Reconciliation and Confirmation. Sacraments are parish celebrations, so our office coordinates children/teens who attend public and Catholic schools and those who home school. This adds an additional 120 to those who are 'serviced' through our office. We are also coordinating a 'Fall Day of Reflection on the 'Healing Ministry of Jesus'. As a way to support school teachers and catechists faith life, we are not charging them for attending.

During the fall and early winter we will be evaluating catechetical models. We have 3 'Listening Sessions' planned for October plus a parent questionnaire. Staff will be looking into other parishes and their models.

Curriculum themes for this year are:

- 3 and 4 year Old: I am Special – my body, family, animals, environment, prayer, and liturgical seasons.
 - Kindergarten: God creates and loves; Trinity, the church, following Jesus, helping others
 - Grade 1; Trinity, Holy Family, life of Jesus
 - Grade 2: Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist/Mass
 - Grade 3: Church (local parish, diocese, Rome, bishops, etc.)
 - Grade 4: Moral development – commandments, works of mercy and beatitudes
 - Grade 5: Sacraments
 - Grades 6-8: Sunday – parables and mystery of God... Wednesday: God & Church History
 - Grades 9 & 10: Sunday – Morality & Social Justice... Wednesday: Creed & Sacraments
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- Grade 2 has special sessions for Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist
 - Grade 10 has additional sessions for the Sacrament of Confirmation
 - All grades will review prayers and discuss liturgical seasons.