

Education Commission Meeting Minutes

November 10, 2009

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

Absent: Pat Bredenkamp (Staff Member)

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

Handouts distributed at the meeting: 2009 Faith Formation Questionnaire results

1. Meeting called to order at 7:20 pm
2. October meeting minutes approved via email.
3. Interfaith Hospitality Program – Family Promise of Anoka County

Members were updated on follow-up discussion from last June's presentation. The Church of the Epiphany is investigating joining the Family Promise of Anoka County program. This is a program that offers shelter for homeless families in Anoka County. Both the parish school and faith formation agree that this investigation should continue. It is understood that any final decision will involve detailed discussions with the school and faith formation over the use of school and parish facilities. Six churches have committed to be host congregations. Six to eight host congregations are still needed.

4. Ministry Fair (November 14-15).

Members signed up to staff the education commission booth after each weekend mass during the ministry fair.

5. Faith Formation Parent Questionnaire.

Katie sent out a questionnaire to 480 faith formation families, of which 35 were returned. The questionnaire was sent in order to evaluate the models and resources used in the current faith formation program. The results were distributed and discussed. Other parishes are being contacted about their faith formation programs to compare the Epiphany curriculum against.

6. Commissions Planning Day, September 12 (Follow-up) Fr. Zehren's vision.

Commission chairs and parish council members met to discuss Fr. Zehren's vision for the parish on September 12. Information is still being gathered and updates for each commission are expected early in 2010.

7. Archdiocesan project: Key Facts about the Archdiocese
What are the implications of this data?

Discussion was started regarding the implication for the school and for Faith Formation and will be continued next month

8. Advisory Committee Reports:

Mary Powell updated the commission that on 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 in Coon Rapids.

9. Faith Formation Report

“Parenting Teens” on Thursday, November 12, 2009 in the meeting rooms.
“Internet Safety” is next Thursday

10. School Report

Jane updated the commission on the Catholic Identity of Epiphany School that was part of the accreditation in March of 2009. Results of the accreditation report were received since the last commission meeting. Epiphany School met criteria for accreditation in the 6 areas of focus. Many positive comments were in the report. Some of the recommendations made were retreat for staff, engage students in the religious curriculum. These are things that Epiphany School is already addressing in the strategic plan. Commendations included the strong presence of the pastor in the school and the good working relationship between the school and faith formation.

11. Adjournment with Prayer

Next meeting: December 8, 2009

November 2009 Faith Formation Education Commission Report:

Our programs are really off the ground and running! In addition to our regular sessions, parent programs to prepare children for First Reconciliation began as well as parent/teen meetings for Confirmation. Our teens had a service Saturday in October and they will help assemble Thanksgiving baskets on November 21. Our Sunday and Elementary Program children are collecting canned goods for the parish Food Drive. We have a large cornucopia up in the cafeteria to demonstrate the gifting of food for others. Special thanks for Paul Manson who provided us with the banner. Janine Ricker, our High School Youth Minister, will be taking 7 teens to Kansas City for the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) from November 19-22. All of our programs will be having the special PCYI (Protection of Children and Youth Initiative) sessions during the next 5 weeks.

The School PTO is co-sponsoring 3 “Parenting Sessions” on Thursdays, November 5, 12 and 19. These are excellent times for parents to get together and learn more about prayer and spirituality of children, parenting teens and internet safety. We are hoping for a great turnout! +This is also a time to remind ourselves that these are ‘all Epiphany children/teens’ no matter where they attend school. We owe it to our parents to support them in as many ways as we can. I am grateful to the PTO for co-sponsoring these nights.

I will be giving you a summary copy of a Faith Formation Parent Survey during our meeting. Staff and members of the Advisory Committee will also be contacting about 20 parishes to learn about their model of faith formation as well as curriculum resources and parent/catechist/sacramental resources and programs. This is all being done to help us evaluate religion curriculum resources during the winter.

Sue Linville just gave me enrollment figures for this year. We currently have 753 children/teens representing 486 families. I anticipate getting about 10 more who attend Catholic High Schools and want to be confirmed. This is about 80 fewer than last year and would speak to a lower number of children/teens in the district. Our staff also works with school parents of 2nd graders for the celebration of First Reconciliation/Eucharist and youth ministry events for any parish teen in grades 6 – 12. I have anywhere from 3 – 12 families who attend a monthly Baptism Preparation Program (they only attend one month). Some of the materials I give them include flyers for the Nursery/Sunday Programs, School Readiness Program (Sue Besst) and our Catholic School.

Principal's Report to the Education Commission

November 10, 2009

Recruitment

On November 16, from 4:00-6:00, the kindergarten staff is hosting a "*Reach for the Stars!*" event for all potential kindergarten children and families. This is an opportunity to explore classrooms, play games, create take home projects, and meet teachers. Invitations to this event were sent to potential kindergarten families and the Marketing Committee is making invitation phone calls.

We have created a year-round timeline of marketing for kindergarten and are in the process of doing the same for grades 4-8.

Marathon Update

The annual school marathon raised \$49,600 and performed 1300 hours of service within the community! Hats off to our spirit-filled students, generous parents, and supportive donors. We had a tremendous parent coordinating committee. Plans are already underway for next year.

Annual Strategic Plan Update

Earlier this year I gave you a copy of our Strategic Plan for the 2009-10 school year. The following are some progress steps toward goal achievement:

- We have formed a Technology Committee and are in the process of writing a three year plan. At least one committee member is attending monthly Archdiocesan Tech meetings.
- The faculty is in the process of articulating school-wide belief statements about Writing. These statements will undergird daily practice. On Tuesday, November 10th, we will be sharing grade level expectations, published writing pieces, and reviewing a sample of student writing by grade level. This is all done to gain clarity regarding teaching and learning throughout the school.
- We are beginning a discussion of moving to trimesters. The District k-12 calendar will be based on trimesters next year and the faculty is supportive of making this change.
- The Marketing Committee has numerous initiatives in the works, including: a volunteer coordinator, program to recognition of staff and volunteers, developing branding standards, and marketing pieces for various events.

Professional Development

In teaching, educators are developing better and better ways to reach every student. In the next couple of months the staff will participate in:

- "Discotheque to High Tech" Junior high teachers will be attending the MN Middle School Conference, December 3 and 4.
- At faculty meetings this year, teachers are sharing professional development training with one another. Last week Jean Klisch and Betty Flannigan shared tips for building student relationships, use of Boom's taxonomy, and student created books.
- We are fortunate to have two teachers in the Murray Institute masters programs---Vickie Paine and Sheri Gulenchyn.
- Six teachers will be trained in using "smart boards" on November 19th.
- Four teachers in grades 3-6 will be participating in teaching writing in-services in November.

November All School Mass

Archbishop Nienstedt will lead the Tuesday, November 24th, all school 8:00 Mass. Join us if you can.

Catholic Identity Report

Earlier this month we received the Catholic Identity Report from the March visit to the Epiphany. At Tuesday's meeting, I'd like to give a verbal summary of the report.