

School Commission (SC) Meeting
Thursday, December 7, 2017
6:00 PM

Present: Father Oakland, Anna Horton, Mike Curran, Brendan Kolding, Julie Leonardo, Amanda Roberts, Sarah Katsandres, Mary Moan, Ben Gauyan, Tara Martin, Pat Galvin, Bill Skibitzke, Kamila Kennedy, Kevin McMahan, Mary Ann Fessler, Jackie Bryan, Charise Addicks, Dino Annest, Jennifer Kokkonis, Karin Hansen, Molly Ward.

Absent: Beth Martin, Andrea Geraghty

Opening Prayer

Father Oakland led the School Commission in the opening prayer.

Approval of November Minutes

The November minutes were deemed approved.

Pastor's Report

Father Oakland has been hearing the children's confessions this week as we've entered the Advent season. It's his favorite time of the year as we wait in hope, optimism, joy, and excitement for Christmas. This is our season of preparation and he encourages us to consider what we will do to prepare for Christmas. It's important that we delay our celebration of Christmas during Advent so there is hope and excitement of what is to come. The preparation period of Advent gives the Christmas feasts meaning and he asks families to thoughtfully prepare for the coming of Christ.

Principal's Report

Principal Horton reported that the students are working on their advent service projects and the donations will be blessed at the School mass next Wednesday.

New lights were installed around Lanigan Gym using the surplus funds from last year's budget. Next efforts will be directed at examining and enhancing the lighting in front of school and around the doors. The overall goal is to improve visibility and safety around the school.

Principal Horton and Tara Martin have been working on finalizing the budget and tuition proposal for the 2018-2019 academic year. Tara has completed a detailed financial mapping of every child and family in the school that reflects in-parish or full tuition schedules, sibling discounts, and tuition waivers. This will allow us to roll up data each year and make solid recommendations based on actual tuition and enrollment data.

Lastly, Principal Horton reminded the SC to read the future / strategic plan she emailed out recently, which we'll discuss in January.

Development Report

Principal Horton provided an update on school development efforts.

1. Tree Lot - as of 12/7 the Tree Lot had grossed \$63k. The lot will be open for a few more weeks and we are hoping to surpass our 2016 revenues. In 2016, we grossed \$92K and our net was \$35k after our charitable donations were distributed.
2. Annual Fund - we currently have a 53% participation rate with ~\$100K pledged and \$44,301 paid. As a reminder, our goal is \$200k. Last year we had a 66% participation rate, so participation is quite low at this point in time. We will revisit our strategy next year; the timing and messaging. To date, we've had emails go out to each grade/classroom from specific families. Starting in January, Beth Martin will ask SC members to also follow-up with families to try and increase our participation rate. Principal Horton, Beth Martin and Jennifer Kokkonis continue to discuss strategy options for the future.

Enrollment/Marketing Report

Jennifer Kokkonis reported that we currently have 487 students enrolled (444 are K-8 and 43 are preschool). Applications for next year are going very well and we currently have 44 Kindergarten applications. In terms of the preschool, the 3s and Pre-k classes have waitlists and there are only a few spots open in the 2s class.

For 2018-2019 we are projecting an enrollment of 496 students, and it is possible we could reach 500. As a reminder, our school maximum is 536 (486 K-8 and 50 preschool) when the classrooms are at full capacity. Our marketing, tours, outreach, and new principal are all contributing to the turn-around in enrollment and applications.

In early January we will participate in the West Seattle Preschool Fair and at the end of January, we will hold our Open House, as part of Catholic Schools Week.

Financial Report

Principal Horton presented an analysis to the SC that addressed tuition rates and historical rate increases for the following:

1. The 14 Catholic Schools in our deanery. She highlighted that our tuition rates are less than OLG, which is our primary competitor.
2. The Catholic schools outside our area that are similar in socio-economic make-up (Bellevue, Queen Anne, Shoreline, Magnolia, Greenwood).
3. Other West Seattle private schools (Tilden, Hope Lutheran, Westside)

Principal Horton highlighted some key items we need to consider from a budget/finance perspective as we move forward, as well as some primary goals to consider:

1. We have an educated, veteran staff. 70% of our teachers have more than 10 years of experience and 45% have more than 20 years, which means they have higher salaries.

2. We have a robust STEM academic program which involves increased resources.
3. We have reading specialists, math specialist, Spanish, art, and technology options that are not commonly found in elementary schools.

Goals for the Future

1. Build up our reserves to \$1M (over the next 5 years)
2. Increase teacher salaries at higher than usual rate over next 2-3 years to better align with recent and future public school pay increases. This does not mean equaling public rates, but we need to be closer than we are to help with recruiting and retention, especially as some teachers approach retirement. We will continue to increase all staff salaries 2-3%.
3. Continue to update the curriculum, grow our STEM program, and address ongoing capital project needs
4. Minimize use of endowment earnings to support school's operational budget

Father Oakland presented on several Parish items the school must take into account as it moves forward with fiscal planning and future endeavors:

1. The Parish subsidy (ordinary income set aside for the school) will likely be reduced in 2018-2019, in the context of declining parish income.
2. The Archdiocesan capital campaign will begin in January. Its focus is on priest pension, retirement and medical funding, including funding for the religious people who work in the AD. We will kick off our parish campaign jointly with them. The AD will give us a goal to meet over a period of 3 years to address these projects and priorities. It will likely impact our budget and fundraising for the next few years.
3. Because of this capital campaign, some of our major school projects may have to move into the regular budget process. Things such as maintenance/replacement of the 95 year old boiler, playground upgrade, tuck pointing on school and parish buildings, remodeling of school bathrooms, stained glass window repairs, priest housing, etc. Father Oakland and Principal Horton will work to prioritize funding for the next 10 years.

Tara Martin presented the budget and tuition proposal for the 2018-2019 academic year which was put together with Principal Horton, Father Oakland and the SC Finance Committee. Because tuition increases could impact fundraising, price current students/families out, and impact recruiting of new students, the plan takes a balanced approach to tuition and fee increase.

She reported that the 2018-2019 plan budgets for 487 students, although this is conservative and we may likely enroll more students. As Principal Horton mentioned previously the budget is built on how families are actually paying tuition to account for various discounts. In line with the AD recommendation, the budget is designed to have tuition and fees cover teacher salaries and benefits, and raises are built in. This will allow us to use fund-raising dollars for other critical needs instead of teacher salaries. We will also be adding 2 new instructional aids – 1 for preschool and 1 for elementary. Lastly, the budget will help us meet our goal of increasing our saving/reserves for key school projects and emergencies.

Tara provided some statistics about our in-parish school family tuition breakdown:

Main School (K-8) Student Tuition

- 13% (59) - Pay the full rate
- 59% (260)- Pay the 1st child in-parish rate
- 25% (103)- Pay the 2nd child IP discount rate
- 3% (12)- Pay the 3rd child IP discount rate
- 1% (4) – Pay the 4th or 5th child IP discount rate

Tara presented the 2018-2019 tuition proposal which was approved by the School Commission:

2017-2018 Tuition Rates	2018-2019 Proposal
\$8,881 Full Rate - 6% increase	\$9,414 Full Rate - 6% increase (\$533 increase /\$44 per mo)
\$6890 In-parish Rate - 3% increase	\$7,303 In-parish Rate - 6% increase (\$413 increase/ \$34 per mo)
	All other discounts, registration expenses and parish tithing requirements remain the same

Parents’ Club Report

Dino Annest reported that Sara Hart will be presenting at the next Parent’s Club meeting on the topic “Respectful Parents, Respectful Kids”.

Closing Prayer

Sarah Katsandres led the Commission in the closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned.