

St. Catherine of Siena Board of Catholic Education
Minutes for Meeting of 10/19/2021

Opening Prayer:

Roll Call: Present: Father Stef, Mike Jacks, Judy Newberry, Becky Schill, Kip Perkins, Juliane Brown, Raymond Schlosser, Sarah Weinel, Jenny Tallarigo, Sarah Dinkelacker

Absent:

Excused:

Pastor's Report (Fr. Stef)

The school children wrote letters to thank Bishop Foys and to welcome Bishop Iffert. Father has not had a full meeting with Bishop Iffert yet. Bishop Iffert has been to four schools already and is interested in attending school functions. Father suggested thinking of a significant occasion where we can invite the new bishop.

Father was delighted that everyone attended the board orientation meeting.

Principal's Report (Mike Jacks)

Mike reviewed his annual goals (to increase enrollment, teacher effectiveness, and academic rigor) and progress on each of these goals. Regarding enrollment, in the 8-10 weeks since he has been principal, Mike has observed Christian Family to be the theme and a big advantage of St. Catherine. We should highlight this family feel and atmosphere as families and society yearn for this sense of connectedness, of being in a place where they are taken care of and are nurtured. A faculty sub-committee is focusing on highlighting Christian Family. By family, this means a place to learn and grow, feel comfortable, and have needs met. We are the students' partners on their spiritual and academic journeys. People yearn for this in academics. There are things we can continue to do and improve on to help students continue to know Christ in an intimate way and grow in that knowledge.

Mike's 2nd goal is to increase teacher effectiveness. Recently, teachers went through Kagan training, which is designed to move beyond the "sit and get" method and puts children into learning groups for more engaged learning. An example is mixed paired share where a teacher presents a question or opportunity for discussion and children partner to discuss. During this process, children build each other up - listen, repeat what their partner is saying, and validate what they are saying. One student talks, the other listens, and then they switch. This process allows the teacher to ensure the concept is understood vs. just asking the question of one child in the classroom. For example, in 1-2 minutes, each child has discussed the concept and the teacher is listening and observing to make sure the concept is understood. The teacher will get a good idea of where to go next with the whole class on a concept. Kids cannot opt out and Kagan forces students to be more engaged learners. Brain research shows engaged learners can compartmentalize their learning and retrieve it faster than just sitting and listening. This approach works in every subject/class.

Mike's 3rd goal is increasing academic rigor - focusing on maximizing instructional minutes. Mike does not want students who understand the concept to sit idle while others are learning the concept. Students who understand the concept do not need to go farther in the curriculum but need to go deeper in the curriculum. A recent example is that some students who understood multiplication were asked to create word problems to show the multiplication problems. This is going deeper. It's difficult to keep all the kids engaged but Mike is not a fan of busy work (handouts unrelated to the concept). He prefers digging deeper into the concepts taught.

About 70% of the classrooms met their MAP goals. Each classroom set a goal for a collective score. 5 classrooms met their goals in math along with 5 in reading and 3 in language arts. Individuals also set goals. 57% met their individual math goals along with 62% in reading and 51% in language arts. We are looking closely at where we want a student to be in the winter. Students are setting their goals and we are charting that. We recently celebrated with those individuals and classrooms who met their goals. It's important that kids are setting goals, meeting them, or adjusting if they haven't met their goals- this is an important life skill. Celebrate small successes. The higher their math score is in the fall, the harder to show growth in the winter and spring. The lower, the easier it is to show growth. If you are already at the upper end of score, it's hard to move significantly. If you move up slightly, that's still great growth. Teachers will help guide the students through that.

There are no active covid cases. The kids are very cognizant of masks. Karen was added to the maintenance crew last year and she cleans all high touch points six times a day. Our evening custodian also does a great job.

Mike is seeing an academic impact from last year, but it is not a huge impact likely because the diocese had more in-person instruction than other local schools.

Religious Education Report (Kip Perkins)

We are one month away from our confirmation parent meeting and will be sending information out shortly.

We are hoping to get a 7th grade catechist by end of October. Kip has enjoyed doing it and learned a lot. However, he also looks forward to walking the building and talking with everyone.

The first service hour program reflection papers are under way. Some still need to perform service and stay motivated. School reflection papers are due on Friday, 10/29 while CCD reflection papers are due on Sunday, 10/31. Mike said there are some students who have had great success with the reflection papers, and they are nudging others but overall, everyone is doing well. This will take a year to catch on.

Evaluation/Planning Committee Report (Becky Schill)

All new members attended the diocesan orientation meeting on October 18th. Based on diocesan expectations outlined in the meeting, the board is in pretty good shape, especially starting with several new members.

Next board meeting was moved to November 23rd.

Policy Review Committee Report (Raymond Schlosser)

Regarding promotion, proposed changes were highlighted in the current draft. Mike proposed a few revisions but asked for a lot of feedback from the board. Mike recommends K-3 promotion and 4-8 promotion wording because reading and math is important in primary and should be a focus whereas all the subjects especially reading, math, writing and religion should be the focus for the upper levels. The board will have a deeper conversation on this in the next meeting.

Raymond provided current drafts of the constitution. Originally drafted in 2004, updates have been in the works. Revisions included removing language that this is a policy making body and that the board is not really focusing on adult education. Article 2 sections 2 and 3 are what we really need to look at in depth and ask if this is what we want the board's mission to be. For membership, the board went from 9 to 6 members. Technically we are not at that right now. We need six consulting members- still a vacancy to fill. We added ex-officio members (faculty member and PTO member assuming a board member is not attending the PTO meetings). Father wanted to leave in discernment process and try to get back to doing that. One other change was in article 3 section 4 stating that in the event father could not find a board member from the May discernment or in parish in general, he would have authority to ask former members to serve on the board in an emergency capacity until the next discernment.

The board should consider who is serving – technically should be two on and two off each year. With the open seats we had, the cycle got messed up a bit.

Mike will serve as the faculty rep. A week before the meetings, Carol Smith will ask if the teachers have any questions/issues and then send to us prior to the meeting.

Public Relations/Marketing Committee Report (Sarah Weinel and Jenny Tallarigo)

Sarah and Jenny will be meeting to discuss some new PR/marketing ideas. Sarah added the cleaning crew to kudos in the parish bulletin. A 4th of July parade committee will be set up in the Spring (need 2-3 parents to help with the float). We will have a lot to present in the upcoming meetings.

Representative Updates

PTO Update: (Mike Jacks)

Tailgate and Parent's Night Out.

Closing Prayer: Becky

Adjournment: