

St. Joseph School Committee Minutes for Wednesday, November 16, 2011

The Committee came to order at 6:30 P.M., with a prayer for school committees provided by Linda Cooney, and prayed in unison by committee members.

Attendees: Linda Cooney, Jill Gilmore, Santo Ingrilli, Wendy Krause, Jim MacGillis, Stephanie Silman, Linda Slawinski, Tom Szews, Jackie Thurner, Gary Wendler, Lauren Weinfurt and Rochelle Steininger

Absent: Jeff McCarthy

The minutes for October 12, 2011, were accepted and approved.

Committee Reports

Technology:

Jim MacGillis reported that there had been no Technology Subcommittee meeting in the past month; hence there was nothing new to report.

PR/Development:

1. Lauren Weinfurt asked for clarification of the role of this committee, since she is new to the School Committee and its work. Linda Cooney said that she would meet with Lauren and go over some ideas to help Lauren in her role as chairperson for the PR/Development committee.
2. It was suggested that perhaps the determination regarding fundraising activities, (which to continue because of profitability, which to discontinue, as well as new ideas), could be undertaken by this committee. School Committee members agreed that, this far into the school year, with fundraising already begun and planning underway for those to come yet this year, it is not the time to change the current fundraisers.

Policy:

1. Wendy Krause reported that the Policy Subcommittee had not yet met.
2. It was been suggested that the out-of-uniform passes be eliminated or capped, since the days that students are out of uniform seem to be less productive than those when they are in uniform. In addition, there are usually a handful of families whose children spend the last half of the year out of uniform at least once a week. This discussion will be taken to Home and School with the hope that they will cap the number of passes given or begin to use the Volunteer Hours for Cookie House. If Home and School does not provide new terms, the School Committee will have to look at this issue again to decide what would be the best policy to follow and to put that policy into effect.

Planning:

1. Jeff McCarthy was not present to report on activity from the Planning Subcommittee, but Tom Szews noted that Jeff had emailed to subcommittee members the vision and mission statements that had been worked on last year.
2. There was discussion about whose vision and mission statements would be used, since during the Accreditation process the St. Joseph School Mission Statement, created by the joint efforts of the entire faculty, was evaluated as a strong point. Additionally, the faculty wanted to keep that statement as it is, according to Linda Cooney and Jackie Thurner. Perhaps the School Committee would use for itself the vision statement that was created last year.

Communication/Public Relations

Home & School Report:

The Home & School Committee has not met since the last School Committee meeting, although the women of the Home & School Committee are working on hospitality for Accreditation and parent-teacher conferences, Cookie House preparation and organizing various fund-raising events.

Parish Council:

Jim MacGillis was asked for a list of all the Parish Council subcommittees. He promised to email a list of these to all School Committee members, while listing verbally for us nine subcommittees: Buildings & Grounds, Stewardship, Prayer & Worship, Finance, Human Concerns, Catholic Formation, School Committee, Endowment and Parish Life.

Principal's Report:

The news from Linda Cooney was that the Accreditation Committee, who had visited St. Joseph School last week Wednesday, (11/9), had glowing reports about the school. Specifically:

1. One of the team members remarked that after being at our school for the two-day visit, it would be a place she would send her children.
2. Sue Watkinson - Principal of St. Leonard School: "As a member of the accreditation team I want to tell you that you have outstanding school programs and a dedicated staff. I personally spoke with you, many of your staff, home and school, and school committee members. Through the conversations I could tell the dedication and caring for student success and pride in your school and all its accomplishments come through loud and clear. I know as an administrator that your contributions and excellent leadership have made this all possible. Kudos to you and your school for a job well done."

3. Suzzanne Zinda – Principal of St. Jerome School: “You have a wonderful school! Thank you for the importance you place on Catholic identity throughout your school. It was a joy to see how you instill our Catholic faith in your children. You can be very proud of your school.”
4. JoAnn Karpin – Principal of Holy Trinity School: “The students that were interviewed talked about the high expectations St. Joseph School expects of them and how they really enjoy all their middle school teachers. I have served on many accreditation teams and this was by far the best accreditation visit I have worked on.”

Teacher Reports:

1. Jackie Thurner added comments she had personally heard from the Accreditation Committee – more praises for aspects of St. Joseph School.
2. Conferences for Middle School have already begun and have started early this year due to the number of Middle School children (75).
3. Jackie also noted that the 8th graders had gone to Cathedral Square to hang the ornaments that the 6th through 8th graders made to decorate the tree for the Holiday Light Festival. She described the ornaments to the Committee – enticing members to visit Cathedral Square to see the tree for themselves.

Event Discussion

Kringle Sale:

1. Jill reported that we received one corporate order for kringles and coffee for a quantity of 180. Packets were sent home with all families and the sale runs from November 17th through December 2nd.
2. Wendy asked for anyone who was able to assist for two hours on December 19th when the corporate order will be packaged for delivery.

New Business

Review of Binder: Jill asked if those new members who had received their binders at the last meeting had any questions; there were no questions.

Goals Discussion: Sub-committees need to meet and set their goals for the year keeping in mind the mission statement and the strategic plan that Parish council has shared with us.

Open Forum: No report

Evaluation

Old Action Items: The secretary reported that:

1. She had emailed copies of the finalized minutes for the July and September meetings to Linda Cooney. Linda said that she had posted these on our School Committee website.

2. None of the subcommittees met during the past month.
3. Linda had obtained approval to move our meeting from November 9th to today, November 16th, in order not to have it on the same day as the visit to St. Joseph School by the Accreditation Team. She thanked the School Committee members who had given their time to meet with the Accreditation Team.

New Action Items:

1. Subcommittees will meet before the next session of the School Committee on December 14, 2011. Members are asked to keep in mind the strategic plan of the Parish Council as they set their goals, in order to be aligned with the vision set by the Council.
2. Because of a meeting of several of the School Committee members with the Finance Committee, also on December 14th, there may need to be some adjustment to our time of meeting on that date, or our meeting may need to be abbreviated. Linda will check into this and inform us in advance.
3. Linda will meet with Lauren to assist with ideas for the PR/Development Subcommittee.

Adjournment:

The motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.