

**OUR NEXT SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING WILL BE HELD THURSDAY,
JANUARY 20, 2022 - 7:30 PM IN THE ACTIVITY CENTER**

**St. Ferdinand School Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 16, 2021 - 7:30 PM
Activity Center
(approved on November 18, 2021)**

Attendees: Erin Boyle Folino, Principal Fr. Peter Gnoinski, Pastor
 Br. James Drangsholt, Parish Staff Mary Ann Barnhart, Parishioner
 Renata Chocianowicz, School Parent Brian Flores, School Parent
 Mario Rodriguez, School Parent Artur Stozynski, School Parent

Guests: School Parents Marie Trudgen, Joanne Crame, Rich and Jessica Wiltse

Facilitator: Erin Boyle Folino

Notekeeper: Erin Boyle Folino

Principal Folino called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM and shared many updates on the school since this was the first meeting of the school year - and the first in-person one since March of 2019:

- Fr. Peter Gnoinski, St. Ferdinand Parish's new pastor, was introduced to the board. He stated his experiences as a priest in his former schools and his hopes for the future growth of St. Ferdinand School under his leadership.
- The teachers will work together at some point this school year to update the school's Mission Statement. Last year, St. Ferdinand School was part of a pilot program for Social-Emotional Learning and the faculty had to write a SEL statement through that. That statement will be the basis of the new School Mission Statement.
- A virtual School Board training was held by the Archdiocese. Principal Folino attended it and will forward the slideshow from it, as it outlines the jobs and functions of a School Advisory Board
- Principal Folino stated enrollment was at 180 students - up 17% from the 155 the school year ended with last year. (The whole Archdiocese has seen an increase in enrollment in its Catholic schools for the first time in 20+ years. Average Catholic school growth is 4% across Archdiocesan schools in Chicago.)
- The marketer hired in 2019 is no longer on staff. Principal Folino and Administrative Assistant Margaret Brumann - assisted by pictures on classroom events by the teachers - handle the marketing to the bulletin, on social media, virtual/newspaper advertising, and on on-line ranking sites. The hope is to repeat appearances in Catholic newspapers and radio, as happened last school year, as well as continue to increase the school's presence in virtual media. Board Member Mario Rodriguez is looking into arranging for Marketing Interns to help out with the school marketing.

- The school is in the process of having banners on the lightposts on Belmont created and installed. This will increase attention to the school's presence on Belmont, which is often overlooked by drivers as their attention is diverted toward St. Patrick High School across the street.
- A new 4th grade teacher was hired, and EANS grant money is being used to pay for a part-time PE teacher to provide an outlet for children to exercise and move during this COVID era. A search was still on the way for a permanent art instructor, which may or may not be paid for via grant monies.
- St. Ferdinand School was blessed to receive the PPP loan in the spring of 2019. The \$193,000 gained through that went toward payroll and utilities expenses, as stipulated in its creation. The loan has been forgiven. The school is now working on resubmission of the \$500,000 EANS grant money, which is used to supplement any learning deficiencies the students may have suffered during COVID. Online learning supplements, new SMART boards to assist with teaching, and COVID safety protocol items may all be purchases with these funds. In addition, the Emergency Connectivity Fund will enable all of the St. Ferdinand School students to have new 1:1 devices (iPads in the younger grades, Chromebooks in the older grades). These devices will arrive sometime this school year.
- The Archdiocese has put into place protocol for the testing of unvaccinated staff. This will go into effect in October of 2021 and provides means by which to report weekly COVID testing and steps that will be taken if this accommodation is not followed.
- The faculty is formulating their annual School Goals, which center around Academics, Catholic Faith, and Vitality. Using data from iReady testing and The Five Essentials Survey, the faculty creates goals and personalized objectives on how they will reach them within their classes.
- The teachers have been in-serviced on blossoming anti-racist ideals within the students and are awaiting a curriculum on this from The Arch. SEL Circles are now a part of each grade level's curriculum after having piloted and learned about them last school year. Teachers were inserviced on increasing personalized learning through The Daily 5 program and are incorporating that system into their ELA curricula, in hopes of especially improving student comprehension with informational text. A new Caring School Communities Discipline Program is now in place; through this, students take accountability for their actions and reflect upon them with their teacher. Punitive discipline is lessened.
- Fundraising includes high hopes for the Fun Run, through which clearing \$10,000 is the goal. A company, Boosterthon, has been hired to help the school achieve this. The Queen of Hearts raffle hopes to return with the Fish Fry. The candle fundraiser will make a return for the holidays, and monthly Dine-and-Shares are being scheduled. Ideas for other fundraisers are welcome.
- Help will be needed by School Board members for Catholic Schools Week tours and marketing. This main Open House will be held on Sunday, January 30, in conjunction with a Family Mass.
- Open floor topics:
 - A suggestion to assign School Board members specific functions was raised
 - A question was raised as to whether clear face shields could be worn by the teachers instead of masks
 - A suggestion was made that the times of the Family Masses could be different each month so they are not all at 11:30.
 - There was an inquiry into what percent of the school families receive financial aid.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM. *Respectfully submitted by Erin Boyle Folino :)*