

OUR NEXT SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING IS TAKING PLACE

THIS THURSDAY, JANUARY 16 - @ 6:30 PM via ZOOM -

please see link in School Messenger email to join.

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*The following Minutes were recently approved by the School Advisory Board:*

**St. Ferdinand School Advisory Board Meeting**

**Thursday, November 21, 2024 - 6:30 PM - via Zoom (virtual)**

Members present:

*School Advisory Board Chairperson Richard Wiltse, Principal Erin Boyle Folino, Operations Director Margaret Brumann, Secretary Isaura Islas, and Members Karin Arroyo, Brian Flores, Ron Miller, and Jessica Wiltse*

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Richard Wiltse at 6:35. An opening prayer was offered by member Brian Flores.

**School Updates - Presented by Principal Erin Boyle Folino:**

School enrollment is at 203 students. Budget was set for 190 students, and enrollment continues to increase each year - up over 30% from 4 years ago, when the student body was at 155 students following COVID.

A 2nd IDEA teacher has been hired through CPS/Catapult to help with push-in and pull-out assistance for the increasing number of students with IEP's who need additional academic support.

A second collaboration between St. Patrick High School Drama teacher Mr. Jim Yost and St. Ferdinand middle school ELA teacher Mrs. Kia Loster had the 7th grade students write - under the teachers' combined instruction - mini plays that the Intro to Drama students at St. Pat's then brought to the stage for the school's fall play, which was also open to the public for viewing.

The annual Thanksgiving Food Drive surpassed totals from other years through the generosity of St. Ferdinand School families. Items are used to put together the 100+ Thanksgiving dinners prepared and distributed from the St. Ferdinand Parish Food Pantry (located in the parish convent) to local residents.

St. Ferdinand students showing strong academic prowess will be acknowledged in an Honor Roll/high iReady Gains Pep Rally/Awards Ceremony the Tuesday before Thanksgiving Break.

All state-required annual drills - armed intruder with CPD, bus evacuation, and tornado - are scheduled for completion during the 2 school days before Thanksgiving Break.

An emphasis on Advent-preparation activities will be a part of December daily life for the students. Third grade teacher Miss Reyna Silva - alongside Principal Folino - planned many of the activities, which will aim to encourage the students to pray, give, and celebrate during the days leading up to Christ's birth.

A big thank you from Principal Folino to everyone who worked on/at/after and donated for the St. Ferdinand School 90th Anniversary Gala will be posted in the church bulletin before the holidays, and will be shared with school families via School Messenger, too.

Catholic Schools Week Open House will be on Sunday, January 26, 2025. The day will begin with Family Mass at 8:30 AM, followed by Open House from 9:30 AM - Noon. The Open House will have, "St. Ferdinand School: 90 Years in Sweet Home Chicago" as its cross-curricular theme across all grade levels. Science Fair projects will be on display, and the Scholastic Book Fair will take place, too. All current school children and families are encouraged to attend - and to invite others to check out St. Ferdinand School! School Advisory Board Members are asked to be present to serve as tour guides for visiting prospective families.

**Current Business: New Electronic Sign on Belmont - Presented by Chairperson Richard Wiltse:**

A group discussion indicating that a timeline needs to be formulated with regards to permits, samples, electric work, and verified money from other parish organizations via Fr. Peter (not in attendance at this meeting due to being in Poland) toward the sign campaign needs to be created. Once this is in place, a realistic date of when the new sign will be unveiled, as well as any further fundraising needed, can be determined. The estimated date for the installation of a new Belmont Ave electronic sign for St. Ferdinand School (and potentially, for St. Ferdinand Parish) is for sometime in the year 2025.

**New Business**

**TARDY POLICY CHANGES:** Principal Folino asked the School Advisory Board for their take on administering fines for excessive tardiness. The consensus was that this should be put into effect, as the issue is leading to repetitive disruption of morning routines across all grade levels, and hampers building the life skill of being on time within some of the students. An addendum to the handbook regarding tardiness will be added after the holidays, and will be in addition to the detentions (Grades 3rd-8th) and parent conferences (Grades PK-2nd) that are already instituted and practiced for excessive tardiness.

**5K RUN:** Two of the School Advisory Board members, Karin Arroyo and Jessica Wiltse, have offered to look into the logistics of having a 5K Run that would be open to the public. This would coincide with the 90th Anniversary Year, as well as raise funds from sources beyond school families toward the electronic sign, scholarships, and other budgetary needs of the school. Further discussion about a potential 5K will be discussed at the January School Advisory Board meeting.

**Parent Club Update - Presented by School Advisory Board and Parent Club Member Karin Arroyo:**

Parent Club is currently preparing for the Breakfast with Santa event, taking place on Sunday, December 8. A QR code for purchasing tickets, as well as for volunteering to help, has been sent out to families.

Parent Club will also sponsor St. Ferdinand School's first "Family Dance" on the evening of Friday, January 31, in JTC. The event will celebrate families and bring Catholic Schools Week to a close. The theme for the night will be, "The '80s."

**Open Floor:**

A parent inquired about the maternity leave of the 4th grade teacher, which had extended past the late October return date shared with 4th grade families at the beginning of the school year. Principal Folino explained that yes, the leave has been extended, and that Mrs. Cynthia Mammoser, who has been the substitute teacher since the first day of school, has graciously continued to substitute teach for weekly extensions. Parents expressed positive commentary about the stability and excellence Mrs. Mammoser has provided within the 4th grade classroom during this time. Principal Folino stated she was unsure at this time as to when Mrs. Hernandez would return.

Another parent inquired about Dennis Uniform. The company abruptly closed its door in November, and Principal Folino was hoping to hear which uniform company would be taking over Dennis' stock. Since the liquidation of the company does not seem to be heading in the direction of a "takeover company," Principal Folino plans to search out a new company after the holidays that can replicate the current uniform skirt pattern and school logo.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

*Respectfully submitted by Isaura Isalas and Erin Boyle Folino*