

**CPOP Advisory School Board Minutes**  
**February 7, 2022**

**Mission Statement:** The mission of Christ, Prince of Peace Catholic Elementary School is to educate and nurture the whole child - body, mind, and spirit - in a Christ-centered, loving environment.

Member Attendance: Kelly Suellentrop, Cindy Fichter, Krista Baucom, Eric Hannah, Nicole Vehige, Nicole Rogels, Jerry Heet, Jane Eschmann, Lisa Perz, Holly Lauter, Julia Lembeck , Fr. Chris Dunlap, Emily Genovese

Non-Member Attendance: Mike and Rene Callahan, Erin O'Keefe, Sarah Garlich, and Jill Wenk

Meeting was called to order by Kelly Suellentrop at 7:01pm.

Opening Prayer- Fr. Chris

Minutes from the January meeting were reviewed. Nicole Rogels moved to approve and Julia Lembeck seconded. Minutes were approved

**Public Open Forum**

Before the open forum began, Kelly let the public know they could stay for some parts of the meeting, but needed to leave for the closed session.

Mike Callahan began the open forum stating he has been wanting to come to a school board meeting for six years now. He stated he wanted to see how Christ, Prince of Peace school board meetings were run. Erin O'Keefe stated the same thing, she has been wanting to come to a board meeting for a while now.

Mike Callahan asked for an explanation of how people are nominated for School Board. Kelly went over the process. A person can self nominate or be nominated by someone in the community. During the May meeting, Board members discuss the nominees and then vote to fill the vacancies by a simple majority vote.

**Principal's Report (Mrs. Fichter)**

Mrs. Fitcher began with a huge thank you for everyone who helped with the open house. We had twenty-six families come through for a tour and all twenty-six have started the registration process. School families have also started the re-registration process through FACTS. All information entered last year (such as address, emergency contacts, etc.) should have rolled over to this year, making the process easier and faster.

**COVID update-** The school has now moved to mask optional protocols. The kids are doing a wonderful job keeping their mask on if their parents want them to continue to wear it. We will continue to wear masks during all school events and during church. Our goal is to eventually

have masks be optional during these gatherings as well. There are schools in the Archdiocese that still require students to wear masks, but we are in a good place right now and Mrs. Fichter feels confident we will continue to move forward in the right direction.

We currently have one teacher positive case and one student positive case. We have been discussing when we will bring back all-school mass. Fr. Chris mentioned we may keep mass the same way and have an all-school mass once a month.

**School Improvement Plan Update** - Teachers have been working very hard on this, we are still in the rough draft stage, once the rough draft is complete the school board will then receive it, review it, and add any additional comments to the draft.

**Catholic Schools Week** - Snow days put a bit of a damper on Catholic Schools Week, but we will be rescheduling the missed events and dress-out days. We thought it would be fun to incorporate last Summer's Vacation bible school songs into Catholic Schools Week and have an all school assembly. All classes enjoyed this event. The rescheduled Spirit Day Middle School volleyball games will be at 12:30 on February 10. Middle School parents will be invited to come watch their children play in the games. Players will not have to wear masks, but the student body and parents who attend will need to wear masks.

**Other Upcoming Events** - This Thursday February 10th we will say the rosary for patriotism. Vianney High School will be coming to school on the 16th and present a play to us. On 2/22/22 we will have tutus and bow ties added to your child's uniform. We are looking forward to March 10, 2022, when we will have an open house for current families. We are also excited to welcome back grandparents day on Mar 11, 2022. Forms will be coming home soon. We know parents and grandparents are looking forward to being welcomed back into the building.

### **Pastor's Report (Fr. Chris)**

All Things New kicked off on January 25, and it will take about a year and a half, involving input on all levels. This will affect everyone. Fr. Chris stressed to take the Disciple Maker's Index survey coming out on Ash Wednesday.

Our parish committee for All Things New consists of Nancy Zoia, Sarah Frye, Steve Notestine, Margie Bittner, Steve Johans, and Tony Metzner. We don't know yet how exactly this restructuring will affect us, but as a parish we are very strong financially. Most of the parishes in our West County deanery are comparable number-wise with us, as regards to day school enrollment and finances. We have 1250 families registered in the parish, which puts us at the high end of medium sized parishes and the low end of large sized parishes. Other areas of our city, county, and Archdiocese face greater struggles. Change can be scary and challenging, but it is what is needed in our diocese to be strong for future generations. The best thing we can do now is continue the work we do here and be honest in our evaluations.

Announcements about decisions are expected to come in May 2023.

We are trying to get more middle schoolers to serve Mass on the weekends.

There were about 150 people who attended Chuck Neff's presentation. We were hoping more school families would attend.

The Interfaith Panel is scheduled for Feb. 19th. Please come and join us for that event from 10:30-12:00 as part of our ongoing 50th Anniversary Celebration.

Let's go Blues.

### **PTO Report (Lisa)**

Imos night is this Wednesday, February 9, rescheduled from last Wednesday because of the snow. We will have a Panera fundraiser night on February 21.

Abilities Awareness Day will be coming soon.

Jen Danker and Julie Selkirk are heading up Carnival. PTO has decided that the way they will help celebrate the 50th Anniversary is to provide free carnival ride bracelets for every student.

There will be a Culvers Ice Cream with Fr. Chris fundraiser in April/May.

We are looking into some family social events. Possibly somewhere like Swing-Around-Fun-Town.

"You've Been Chomped" has raised \$1000.

Mrs. Fichter has been in contact with the Xain family about how the school community can help Teghan in the wake of her mother's death. The school will communicate how best to proceed once the family has time to process and determine what best they need.

### **Development Report (Nicole V.)**

No report

### **Marketing Report (Nicole R.)**

No report - Just that the school children were amazing when giving tours at the Open House.

It was asked if there was any way current families could benefit from the same kind of information prospective families received during Open House. Mrs. Fitcher said that is what the event on Mar 10, 2022 will be about. It's for our current families to come in and see what their children have been doing in school.

### **General Discussion**

Jill Wenk spoke about how several families are considering leaving because of lack of community, and feeling like they don't have a voice on decisions the school is making. Fr. Chris and Mrs. Fichter reiterated that the best way to address those concerns is to personally discuss these issues with them. CPOP is working toward safely opening things back up, and there are several community events on the schedule for the remainder of the year.

Non-members were dismissed at 8:20.

### **Financial Report (Eric Hannah)**

We are proposing no increase in tuition for the 2022-2023 school year. One reason for not increasing the tuition is the upcoming All New Things campaign and to remain competitive with the surrounding schools. We are financially strong enough to absorb a 0% increase. Teacher salaries and health care coverage went up 3% for next school year. However, we are seeing more income from our Early Learning Center due to high enrollment.

Eric mentioned the need for continued fundraising, whether we go back to a large auction every other year or continue with smaller yearly events that combined would bring in the same totals as a large auction.

We increased our Marketing budget from \$5000 to \$10000 since consistent enrollment is key to keeping us in good financial standing.

Contract Services for the cleaning of our building will also go up. We are paying more, but having the full services offered are essential to keeping our building a clean, healthy place for our students and faculty. They do a really good job.

Personnel costs are down because we don't have as many aides on staff.

Utilities have increased from last year, but that is typical across the board.

Food Service Consultants contract fees will also go up. Jerry-FSC-

The Parish Subsidy is currently \$300,040, which covers approximately 20% of the schools operating budget. A 20% subsidy of a healthy school, as the majority of the budget is self-sustaining.

The question was posed about who covers the cost of large expenses, such as replacing the HVAC, that may not have been budgeted for. Fr. Chris explained something like that would be a shared expense between the parish and school. It was also noted that often with big expenses like this, the PTO, Athletic Association, and Knights of Columbus contribute from their reserves, which are separate from both the parish and school.

After the report, the President moved to approve a 0% increase in tuition for the 2022-2023 school year. It passed unanimously.

A note was made that while historically the budget and tuition have been approved during the February meeting, it would be better to begin this process earlier in the year so that everything is set prior to our Open House in January. The recommendation was made to have the budget and tuition set by December next year.

### **President's Report (Kelly Suellentrop)**

State of School- In place of a town hall meeting, we plan to send out an email with all relevant information, such as the budget, test scores, improvements, etc the week of March 6th. The Open House event for current families will serve as a replacement for the formal town hall, as it will give parents a chance to see what's happening in school, ask questions of teachers and administrators, and speak with Board members present at the PTO social afterwards.

Non-members are welcome at Board meetings. If this is something more non-members are going to be interested in doing, it is in the best interest of everyone to make guidelines for attendance more clear cut to ensure meetings remain productive and efficient.

### **Board Open Forum - What's the Buzz? (Round Table)**

- After the recent sacrament meeting, parents came away wanting to know more about the day of First Communion rather than experiencing a mini retreat.
- Virtual learning remained challenging for younger students, and it was asked if the format could be changed for ELC-1st. Mrs. Fichter acknowledged the issues and said they had been discussing this as well.
- While some have expressed concerns about a lack of community or how things have been handled during the pandemic, others noted that has not been their experience and have appreciated or understood the decisions that have been made.
- The question was asked whether field trips will begin happening again. The plan is to resume, especially as many of the places our students went to begin to open back up to school groups.

Meeting Adjourned @ 9:52pm  
Minutes submitted by Emily Genovese