

**SMOTH School Commission**  
**7/12/10**  
**5:02 – 6:11 PM**  
**Minutes – Approved 8/10/10**

**Members:** Rhee Fincher (interim chair), Fr. Jerry Ragan, John Strelec, Catherine Tribby, Ruth Ann Vericella, Charles Whatley, Lisa Whatley

**Excused:** Joe McBride, Lisa Murray, Tony Ramage, Steve Hagler

The meeting opened with prayer led by Catherine Tribby.

Minutes from 6/8/10 meeting were approved.

**Leadership recruitment update – Fr. Jerry**

- Assistant principal recruitment continues. Mr. \_\_\_ Connor (Katie Connor's father-in-law) was very interested in the position, but declined due to wife's injury. Eleanor M. Willingham, EdD has been interviewed by Joe McBride. The group emphasized importance of a strong background in curriculum.
- Interim principal: Joe McBride is already functioning in his role. The group agreed on the importance of supporting Joe to maximize his chance of a successful transition from a somewhat ill-defined role as assistant principal to the role of principal. Internal transitions are often difficult as the promoted person establishes credibility in a new role.
- Music teacher position open since previously hired teacher resigned before school started.

**Financial concerns – Presented by Fr. Jerry, followed by group discussion**

- Ended FY 2010 with \$175,000 deficit which we have been able to manage so far. However, there is a growing gap between school family giving in offertory and what is allocated to school. In FY 2004, the gap was \$410,000; in FY 2010 it was \$850,000. The largest category of increased operating costs is utilities and insurance costs.
- Consider hiring a part-time music teacher (rather than 1.0 FTE)
- SMS teachers are paid at 90% of local public schools (Diocesan level is 80% of local public schools) in an effort to recruit and retain effective teachers
- Changes that impact budget: There are about 80 fewer children in school now than in 2000 (expect families decrease tithing when they take children from school, although surmise has not been documented).
- Since stewardship does not include Aquinas, some families take children from SMS before 8<sup>th</sup> grade because know they cannot afford Aquinas. Consider starting a scholarship fund such that tithing families could receive Aquinas scholarships if needed. Staff feels some families are not living stewardship, yet benefit from Catholic education
- Among the school families whose children attend the school using the stewardship model, about 20% are not meeting their pledged commitment

- Consider option for parish families to pay tuition for a needy SMS student; Ruth Ann suggested desirability of combining Immaculate Conception and SMS if it is financially feasible.
- Lunch program – over budget; prior principal did not raise funding for lunch (\$3.00/lunch); a committee member cited a logistical problem with card swipe (sometimes charge is made when apparently child did not eat, leading to another lunch bill at the end of the month)

**Concern about assistant principal role**

- For several of the years Joe served as assistant principal, he apparently had no defined position description.
- If do not have an assistant principal by start of school, several retired principals have volunteered to help

**Committees:** The group reviewed the committees delineated in the bylaws draft and the committees the School Commission is considering. The list below reflects an amalgamation of the two and the Commission members who have volunteered (or been suggested) to serve so far. Members were asked to identify other members of the parish who would be well suited to serving on one of these committees.

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Commission members</b>	<b>Other members</b>
Stewardship/Finance	Catherine Tribby, Steve Hagler, Charles Whatley	
Marketing/Public Relations/ Development	Mary Davis, Lisa Whatley	
Facilities/ Infrastructure Technology		
Academic Excellence/Educational Technology	Tony Ramage	
Mission/Catholic Identity		
Nominating		
Policies		

**Leadership for all parish ministries:** On October 13, 2010 (Wed) at 7:00 PM, there will be a mandatory meeting for all school families for stewardship formation. Fr. Jerry charged the Stewardship/Finance committee to ensure all school families attend.

The meeting adjourned at 6:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhee Fincher