

SMOTH School Commission
8/7/2012
Parish Hall
Minutes

Attendees: Mary Davis, Fr. Jerry, Rhee Fincher, Carol Fuller, Steve Hagler, John Strelec, Ruth Ann Vericella, Charles Whatley, Mary Beth Mitchell (Assistant Principal; from Chicago/Elgin, IL)

Excused: Tony Ramage, Kyle McArdle, Theresa McArdle

The meeting opened with prayer at 5:06 PM.

Principal's report – Joe McBride

3 new teachers have been hired:

- Natalie Riney – Music teacher - worked previously at the Walker School in Atlanta
- Allison Kelly – 5th grade - alumna of SMS and Aquinas, recently taught in Burke County
- Linda Whettle – 4th grade
- Leanne Jackson – school nurse

AY 2013: School starts for teachers on Friday, 8/10 and students begin on 8/16

Website

- Website has been redone over summer and is being completed by Solutio (Wichita, KS); it is expected to be open to public by the end of August
- Thanks were expected to Chris Sweeney, Alicia Ramage, and Joe who have been working with Solutio

Survey of CCD parents

- Joe will follow up with Alicia and Tony Ramage, who started working on survey; plan to get it out early this fall. The survey will be given to parents of the CCD children and will focus on their decision-making process in choosing a school for their children. A clear understanding of why they did not choose SMS may help guide actions to increase enrollment. The results of the survey must be used to develop and implement plans to meet Goal #1 of Marketing Committee (“Create a ‘top 5’ list of modifiable factors that will increase the appeal of the school to parishioners not utilizing the school”)

CCD engagement

- Starts in Sept. - probably 9/16
- Joe and Charles will work with PTO (meets 9/17) to plan first get-together with CCD parents

Marianite and SMS

- Lisa McArdle has agreed to be SMS Marianite editor – commission members are very pleased
- Lisa will compile a list of topics to cover and who will be responsible for writing each column. Ideas mentioned at the meeting include football, carnival 100-year celebration, sacramental preparation, Beta Club

Parish bulletin and SMS

- Chris Sweeney – will continue to write the “School Scoop” in bulletin; a member suggested using this column as an opportunity to promote accomplishments of SMS students and engagement with the community

Student speakers before Mass

- Joe and Mary Beth will organize; plan is for students to speak monthly at all Masses
- Suggestion: Could children invite parishioners to visit school

Accreditation: SMS is fully accredited by SACS and FCC – need to publicize

School database has been re-done to be more user-friendly. Grade book, parent portal, and curriculum materials are among the improved elements

Notre Dame Curriculum Initiative

- Joe and Mary Beth attended seminar in Savannah for administrators and teachers in the diocese at which all schools in the diocese were represented. The Savannah diocese is one of 9 dioceses invited to participate in this major curriculum initiative which will start with social studies curriculum (AY 2013) and math (AY 2014) and is expected eventually to include all subject areas. They will present results of meeting to SMS faculty and engage them in working on it. They are working on how to present to teachers to help ensure “buy in” from them.
- Fr. Jerry will bring more info on Notre Dame ACE Leadership Program
- Joe will update Commission at next meeting on progress

Fr. Jerry’s update

- Aquinas High School
 - Principal announced last week that she will become founding principal of a Catholic high school in Bluffton; official search for new principal will begin in 10/2012
 - Bishop will attend listening session at Aquinas 8/21/2012 – 7 PM – Fr. Jerry encouraged all SMS commission members to attend if possible
 - Joe and Mary Beth are working to parlay the leadership change into a more effective relationship between SMS and Aquinas
- Immaculate Conception
 - Kevin Newhall has replaced Jonathan Pike as principal; Mary Beth and Joe have made connections with Kevin and will be working with him to enhance the relationship between SMS and IC
- Fr. Jerry is creating the 100th anniversary planning committee, including people with long-standing connection of Catholic education at SMOTH
 - Members will include
 - Lois Brooks (history of Mt. St. Joseph’s)
 - Sister Laura Ann Grady (had been principal at St. Joseph’s)
 - John Sherer (Mother was parish secretary when school started)
 - Lisa Whatley
 - Johnny Markwalter
 - Mary Freeman
 - Invite chair to attend a SMS commission meeting

SMS Commission meeting dates for AY 2013 – Please mark your calendar

- September 17
- December 11
- January 22
- March 5
- April 23

The meeting adjourned with prayer at 6:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhee Fincher

