

SMOTH School Commission
9/7/2010
5:01 – 6:20 PM
Draft Minutes

Members: Rhee Fincher (interim chair), Fr. Jerry Ragan, John Strelec, Catherine Tribby, Joe McBride, Tony Ramage, Steve Hagler, Ruth Ann Vericella, Mary Davis

Excused/Absent: Lisa Murray, Charles Whatley, Lisa Whatley

The meeting opened with prayer led by Fr. Jerry.

Minutes from 7/12/2010 meeting were approved.

Update from Principal Joe McBride

School is off to a good start. The opening was highlighted by a “cameo” appearance by Brennan Simpkins. Teachers seem to be “in the swing” of the year and Joe is receiving good vibes from parents. Joe already has made several changes in his new role as principal that he thinks are being well received.

Improved evaluation process: Joe met with the coordinators (5 department chairs) on 9/7/10 and reviewed areas of strength, areas to work on, and the new evaluation process. The plan entails 2 evaluations/year with each teacher, fall and spring following visits to classroom. The meetings will include discussion of contracts and letters of intent for the next year. Each teacher and Joe will agree on two goals/teacher/year and the outcomes that will be used to assess the degree to which they have been completed. A suggestion was made to consider sharing goals (de-identified) with all teachers to encourage collaboration and sharing ideas for areas to work on, encouraging a more open and collegial community. Joe started a monthly teacher get-together with the first at Ray’s Coastal Café, attended by 20 of 35 teachers. Teacher morale seems good and concerns minimal.

Cross-curricular interaction: Entry expectations will be defined for each grade to determine what students need to accomplish by the end of the year before. These will be predicated on national standards and diocesan standards.

Curricular conversations with Aquinas: Joe will initiate curricular conversations between SMS and his counterpart at Aquinas. The goal is to increase the pipeline of students who graduate from SMS and go to Aquinas. The principals will determine the data that would be helpful to analyze, including comparison on entry tests of SMS graduates vs. other feeder schools.

Lunch program is being reviewed. The price was raised from \$3.00 to \$3.50/lunch with subsequent drop in subscribers to 140/day from 170/day.

Leadership Recruitment

Pastoral Council discussed leadership recruitment and recommended initiating a fast-tracked principal search after which a search for vice principal will be initiated. The search committee will be chaired by Jim Purcell (chair, Pastoral Council); Fr. Jerry is finalizing the list of other members. Initial interviews of non-local candidates will be conducted by phone; only highly competitive candidates will be invited to the campus to interview. The vice principal search will follow to enable the principal to play a substantial role in the recruitment.

Bylaws

Two changes were endorsed unanimously to the bylaws that were approved 8/10/10. In Article II, Section III, the following sentence was deleted: “Members may not be a paid employee, or spouse of an employee, under contract with the school.” In Article V, Section VI, the following duty for the Academic Excellence committee was added: “Collaborate with the principal to ensure methodologies to assess academic excellence are implemented and used for continuous improvement”. After brief discussion, the group decided the principal should be a voting member and there should not be a teacher representative. Teachers will be apprised of the Commission’s work through the principal who will ensure flow of information, suggestions, or concerns to the Commission. Good communication and input from teachers will be ensured by including teachers on committees of the Commission.

School Commission members and terms

Name	Constituency Represented	Term (Yrs.)	Dates	E-mail
Rhee Fincher, Chair	Pastoral Council	3	2009-2012	rfincher@mail.mcg.edu
Lisa & Charles Whatley	PTO presidents	1	2010-2011	cewhatley@yahoo.com
Catherine Tribby	Parent	3	2009-2012	mtribby@comcast.net
Tony Ramage, MD	Parent	2	2009-2011	atramage@knology.net
John Strelec	At-large	3	2009-2012	jstrelec@knology.net
Steve Hagler	Parent	2	2009-2011	Shagler167@bellsouth.net
Ruth Ann Vericella	At-large	2	2009-2011	ravericella@hotmail.com
Fr. Jerry Ragan	Ex-officio	-	-	frjerry@knology.net
Lisa Murray	Staff	-	-	Lisa.Murray@knology.net
Mary Davis/706-733-6627	Staff	-	-	davism@knology.net

Recommendations were made to Fr. Jerry of people who might be asked to serve on the School Commission.

Committee reports

Stewardship: Catherine reported that Stewardship will begin by gathering information, assessing communication strategies, and assisting with the 10/13/2010 gathering.

Marketing: Tony report that Alicia Ramage and Chris Sweeney began a “welcoming committee” last year, which will be an important vehicle for the Marketing Committee. The group will work on website development (working with Mary Krukow and should be up soon), giving SMS greater visibility at the church (e.g., make information about school more prominent in narthex, weekly school update in bulletin, weekly announcements from students before mass), engaging strategies to understand why parish families think there are better alternatives to SMS (e.g., survey parents who send children elsewhere about why)

Committee members and terms

Committee	Commission members	Other members	Chair
Stewardship/Finance	Steve Hagler, Charles Whatley, Joe McBride	Dori Thorstad, Penny Goodman, Steve Givens, Tommy Rose	Catherine Tribby
Marketing/Public Relations/Development	Mary Davis, Lisa Whatley	Chris Sweeney, Alicia Ramage	Tony Ramage
Facilities/ Infrastructure Technology			
Academic Excellence/Educational Technology	Joe McBride		
Mission/Catholic Identity			
Nominating	Fr. Jerry, Charles Whatley		
Policy	Joe McBride		

Topics for October 12, 2010 meeting

- All members were asked to read “The Catholic Schools We Need”, *America Magazine*, for discussion
- How do we reward and retain exceptional teachers? (Part of principal’s report)

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhee Fincher