

SMOTH School Commission
11/25/2013
5:00-6:30 PM (Parish Hall)
Minutes (DRAFT #1)

Attendees: Rhee Fincher, Steve Hagler, Joe McBride, Mary Beth Mitchell, Ruth Ann Vericella
Guests: Gina Crow, Felicia Schneider

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM with prayer led by Joe McBride. The minutes of the 10/15/2013 meeting were approved.

Mothers' Day Out (MDO) and Nursery

- Gina Crow, director of the nursery and MDO and Felicia Schneider, leader of the 4 year old/pre-K class, came to the meeting to discuss the continuum of Catholic education from nursery to MDO to SMS. After thanking them for their effective ministry, they were asked to comment about the programs and how the School Commission can support them.
- MDO
 - Ninety percent of the MDO children matriculate into SMS. Those who don't usually are split-faith parents. Gina advises parents that they must participate in stewardship to enter SMS as non-tuition students. All participants attend Mass every Thursday (9:15 AM)
 - MDO is currently a 4 day/week program; there have been discussions about increasing to 5. Generally, children <2 years old cannot attend more than 2 days/week. Families pay tuition based on number of days children come
 - The program is currently as large as it can be for the space and personnel available: 14-16 4-year-olds, 13 3-year-olds, 12 2-year-olds with 2 teachers/room. Michelle _____, leader of the nursery, is also a pre-school teacher
 - MDO follows a defined curriculum that helps prepare children for entry into SMS; Appleby librarian comes 1 hr/month
 - Gina and Felicia were asked how the School Commission can assist with their ministry: They will compile a list of needs/desires and share it with Ruth Ann who will report again at the next SC meeting. They are very dedicated to and seem satisfied generally with the personnel, although feel they need more help. While they are "making do" with the current facilities, repairs, updates and improvements are needed as outlined in Ruth Ann's report (see Oct. minutes); Gina will make a list of needed repairs and equipment and send it to Ruth Ann.
- Nursery – Gina Crow, Director
 - Ruth Ann reviewed the recommendations she had previously presented to the SC
 - Leader timeliness
 - Nametags for all children
 - Open second room as needed (Gina: Problem is that there must be 2 adults/room according to Virtus guidelines)
 - Consider a new ministry of middle-aged women volunteers so mothers whose children use nursery don't need to be the volunteers
 - Add dishwasher to keep toys clean (parishioner has volunteered to provide a dishwasher)

- Changing table – put in convenient place (Gina has gotten a low changing table/gloves)
- Keep parent volunteer schedule (Gina keeps list; omissions are those who have not yet completed the required Virtus training)
- MDO teachers are paid; nursery teachers are not (Query: Why the inequity?)
- The following recommendations were discussed (Gina will provide list of needs)
 - Ask Rick Dimenna (head of Habitat for Humanity) if he could identify parishioners who have technical expertise in areas of need (e.g., a member of the parish to replace toilet (currently there is only a handicapped high toilet))
 - Fix broken gate
 - Replace glass with tempered glass
 - Others
- Sarah O’Neill was not able to attend the meeting and will be asked to report about MDO at 12/17 meeting (as Ruth Ann has regarding the nursery).

Rhee thanked Gina and Felicia for their hard work and meeting with the SC. Ruth Ann will follow-up; Sarah will report on MDO at the next meeting.

Succession planning and SC committees

- All SC members were asked to email suggestions for new members before 12/17 meeting
- Discussion yielded the following characteristics as desirable among the members:
 - Young parents, including some who don’t yet have children at Aquinas
 - Parishioners who have community/professional connections that might help meet school needs
 - Background in marketing – (e.g., Jordan Watwood)
 - Columbia county parents
 - Background in/commitment to stewardship
 - Don’t necessarily need to be parents
 - Represent continuum of education
 - Someone with children at Aquinas – build concept of continuum
 - Someone involved in nursery/MDO (e.g., Gina Craw, Felicia Schneider)
 - Aquinas principal (Maureen _____)

The SC will have two standing committees, Marketing & Public Relations and Stewardship and Development. Plan to recruit new Commission members to chair each of these; members of the committees do not need to be members of the SC

- Marketing (outside school) & Public Relations (within school)
 - Consider annual meeting with leaders from nursery, MDO, SMS, Aquinas – for parents
 - What can we do together to market schools?
- Stewardship & Development
 - Could Aquinas and SMS both be parish schools? Shared services? Economy of scale?
- Nominating and policy become group functions

The following were deferred:

- Each committee chair present goals/objectives - (1) 12-18-month range and (2) 3-4-year range (Establish committee leadership and membership first)

- Review Bylaws - Membership (Article 2) – Discuss whether to change
Section IV Members will serve 3-year terms
Section V Members may be appointed to a second 3-year term. Members will not generally serve more than two consecutive 3-year terms.

The meeting adjourned at 6:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhee Fincher
Chair

Dates of School Commission meetings for AY 2014 – Please put these on your calendar and let Rhee know if you have a conflict.

December 17, 2013

February 18, 2014

April 15, 2014