

St. Joseph School Home and School Association

April 25, 2017

Meeting Minutes

Opening/Welcome

The third Home and School Association meeting of the 2016–2017 school year was held on Tuesday, April 25, 2017, in Good Shepherd Hall. President Molly Fulton called the meeting to order at 5:16 p.m. Principal Darlene Braun led the members in an opening prayer.

President Fulton began the meeting by reminding those present of the role of the Home and School Association which is to provide support to St. Joseph School, to build community among St. Joseph School parents and teachers, and to raise funds to ease the tuition burden on all St. Joseph School families.

School Carnival Report

President Fulton reported that the school carnival went very well. She said that carnival chair, Lindsay Strohfus, and members of her family independently did the bulk of the planning and preparation for this event, and they did an outstanding job. The funds raised at the carnival are noted in the Treasurer's Report to follow.

The Home and School officers have pledged to work with Lindsay in the coming weeks to come up with a plan for next year to better divide the workload involved in this fundraiser and get more volunteers involved earlier in the process so that the burden on Lindsay is lessened.

Scrip Report

Michele Snyder reported that Scrip sales have raised about \$6000 for the school so far this school year. She noted that the program has done pretty well, but it could always do better with increased participation among parents. Michele reminded those present that Scrip is easy to use and can be purchased quickly using a smartphone. She and others who use it regularly are always willing to help those parents who are just getting started. Michele described a recent weekend trip she had taken and how, with a little advanced planning, she was able to use Scrip for many of her purchases including her hotel stay, and she estimated that she earned about \$60 for the school that weekend.

Michele estimated that if every St. Joseph School family purchased approximately \$200 in Scrip every month, the school could earn \$20,000 per year. She noted that purchasing Scrip monthly can quickly

become a habit. Purchasers are not buying anything new; they are simply using a different form of payment for items they already buy.

MOTION: Teresa Madsen moved, seconded by Kim Edson, that the Home and School Association officers and Scrip Chair, Michele Snyder, evaluate the St. Joseph School Scrip program this summer to look for ways to enhance the program with the hope of increasing participation in it. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Treasurer's Report

The Home & School Association Treasurer, Cara Gray, provided the report. She said the account balance on January 1, 2017, was \$57,693, and the current balance (as of April 24, 2017) is \$22,533.

Since January 1, the association has received income from the following sources: \$11,219 from the school carnival; \$3100 from Dakotamart (income from submitted receipts); \$3000 from the sale of Scrip; and \$120 from the sale of magazines.

Since January 1, the association's expenses have been as follows: \$10,000 was transferred to the St. Joseph School Technology Account; \$40,000 was paid on the money owed to Ss. Peter and Paul Parish (\$26,000 is still owed); \$2500 was paid to Dakota Education Consulting for strategic planning assistance; and \$75 was paid to members of the afterschool program staff for working extended hours on the evening the strategic plan was presented.

Volunteer Recruitment for 2017-18 School Year

President Fulton announced a new approach that will be used to solicit volunteers for the fundraisers this coming year. She thanked those who offered feedback regarding volunteer recruitment. A volunteer contract will be sent to each family with their tuition contract. Families are asked to read, sign, and return the volunteer contract. Afterwards, a SignUpGenius will be posted on the school's website and emailed for families to commit to specific volunteer opportunities.

The hope is that this new approach will make tracking volunteers easier. It will also allow for e-mail reminders to go out to parents reminding them of their volunteer activities a few days in advance.

New Association Officers

President Molly Fulton announced that she and her husband, Neil, will be stepping down at the end of this school year so a new president for the coming year is needed. She asked for nominations from the floor and noted that current Vice President, Lisa Stanley, has agreed to take on this role.

MOTION: Lori Nemec, moved, seconded by Jamie Kneip–Maher, that Lisa Stanley be elected President of the Home and School Association for the next two years. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

President Fulton then asked for nominations from the floor to fill the office of Vice President that will be vacant upon Lisa Stanley's transition to the office of President. She also noted that Kristin Walti has agreed to take on this role.

MOTION: Michele Snyder moved, seconded by Becky Kitts, that Kristin Walti be elected Vice President of the Home and School Association for the next two years. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Clare Charlson will serve another year as the Home and School Association Secretary, and Cara Gray will serve another year as the Home and School Association Treasurer so with those two elections, the roster of officers is filled for the coming school year.

Update on the Strategic Planning Process

President Fulton announced that the Strategic Planning Development Team now consists of the following members: Darlene Braun, Becky Walsh, Eileen Herrin, Jim Terwilliger, Brandon Brake, Brittany Novotny, Shad Ludemann, and Neil and Molly Fulton. The team presented the strategic plan to the St. Joseph School Council earlier this month. The Council endorsed the plan. Council members did, however, ask that any references to a school dress code or uniforms be removed from the plan, and they also set back the anticipated time table for plan implementation.

President Fulton reminded the members that the plan is a living document that will likely change over time, though she indicated that does not foresee major changes. The goal has been and always will be to culturally and financially sustain the school. The first steps in continuing the strategic planning process will include supporting the plan, improving communication among parents and mentoring new parents, working on improving recruitment efforts, and working on establishing and maintaining communication with Saint Joseph School alumni. Connecting with alumni will begin by sending a letter to those graduating from high school this year who attended the school.

The plan includes the hiring of a development director. The School Council is committed to that position for at least three years. In preparing to fill this position, the development team will confer with representatives of similar schools that employ developmental directors for advice and to get their questions answered.

Motion: Becky Walsh moved, seconded by Misty Roberts, that the Home and School Association endorse the strategic plan for St. Joseph School that was compiled with the help of Dakota Education Consulting and recently endorsed by the St. Joseph School Council. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

When asked if St. Joseph School families would receive progress reports on the strategic plan, President Fulton responded that the development team would provide updates at every Home and School Association meeting and through other communications to parents throughout the school year. She noted that the strategic plan is currently available on the St. Joseph School website, and if it were to undergo any significant changes, those changes would also be made available on the website.

New Parent Meeting

President Fulton announced that a new parent meeting will be held in May for the parents of incoming kindergarten students and any other parents who may be new to the school. She asked those in attendance to jot down any suggestions they had for items that could be covered at the meeting, including questions they had when they were new to the school.

School Council Report

School Council President Patty DeVaney gave the report. She said the last meeting of the council was primarily devoted to the setting of the budget and the tuition rates for the next school year. The council voted to increase tuition by \$120 per student, which will allow a two percent raise to be given to the teachers.

As previously mentioned, the council also endorsed the strategic plan at the April meeting.

Principal's Report

Principal Darlene Braun reported that 184 students are currently registered to attend St. Joseph School next year. This is the highest number of students the school has had since 1962. Mrs. Braun noted that the high enrollment is a good testament to the school's reputation and credited current St. Joseph School parents for doing a good job of promoting the school.

Mrs. Braun said that the character trait for the month of April was selflessness and that students were encouraged to look beyond themselves to serve others. She reminded those present that the spring concert is May 3rd at the Riggs Theater. The concert has a patriotic theme and the students are asked to wear red, white, and blue.

Lastly, Mrs. Braun extended her thanks to Jen Lavinger for counting all those Dakotamart receipts from which the school recently earned \$3100. She noted that it was a good year for the school, and she thanked the Home and School officers, the St. Joseph School staff, and all the parents for their part in making it so.

Conclusion

With all the business complete, President Molly Fulton thanked all those in attendance. The meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Clare V. Charlson
Secretary