

ST. ALEXANDER SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES
January 23, 2018

Call to Order:

President Devine called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm in the School, 7025 West 126th Street, Palos Heights, Illinois. Present were School Advisory Council (SAC) Members: Maria Anderzunas, Dave Devine, Meghan Dougherty, Dan Nicholson, and Carol Reckwerdt. Also present were Father Michniewicz, Principal Cathy Biel, Assistant Principal Mary Dombrowski, and Parish Finance Director Paula Somers.

Opening Prayer: Father Michniewicz lead the opening prayer.

Minutes: There were no minutes from the October meeting, as it was an executive session.

Principal's Report: Principal Biel provided an enrollment update. Three classes (next year's 4th, 5th, and 7th) have students on a wait list, with most other grades near the Archdiocesan-mandated classroom limits (i.e., 30 students per classroom in grades K-5th; and 35 students per classroom in grades 6th-8th). Enrollment is ongoing, so these numbers are likely to increase with time. Principal Biel and the Council discussed what the wait list is and what it is not; and how important it is that current school parents understand the enrollment numbers are likely to change over the next several months as enrollment season continues. Principal Biel also noted that Catholic Schools Week will begin soon, and encouraged members to participate in tours as part of the Prospective Family Open. Principal Biel announced that St. Alexander School will be taking part in an AdvancEd evaluation on March 13th. This evaluation is part of the Archdiocesan initiative to support national accreditation of the Archdiocese's school system. Principal Biel also mentioned that the tax credit scholarship granting organization applications are beginning to open up, with Big Shoulders opening on January 22nd, and Empower Illinois opening on January 31st. Finally, Principal Biel announced several events linked to Catholic Schools week, as well as the Parish Mission, First Reconciliation, PreK Valentine Tea, end of the 2nd trimester, and when 2nd trimester report cards will be sent home.

New Family Integration: Member Nicholson and the Council discussed the importance of welcoming new families, and that such awareness and outreach should be (and is) apparent among the teachers, students, and parents of St. Alexander School.

Raffle Party Update: Member Dougherty informed the Council that tickets are \$35 in advance of the party, which will be on March 3rd and will have a St. Patrick's Day theme.

5k Fundraiser: President Devine and the Council discussed whether proceeds from the 5k fundraiser are still being directed toward technology or if they can be directed elsewhere to benefits other facets of the School. Principal Biel noted that there are still remaining technology needs to be addressed, including the main computer lab, so the proceeds will still be directed to technology.

Pastor's Report: Father Michniewicz reminded the Council that the Parish mission will take place next Monday through Wednesday, and that all ages older than ~7th grade are not only welcome, but would benefit from participating. He also asked for patience with regard to the Church windows, which are slated to be completed within the next 3months. Father Michniewicz also announced that the Parish Picnic will take place on June 24th. Father Michniewicz also

informed the Council that the bathrooms will be renovated beginning in July. Finally, Father Michniewicz asked School families to pray for the families of Incarnation School and Our Lady of the Ridge School, and to do what is necessary to ensure a smooth and welcoming transition to families affected by the closures.

Questions from Visitors: A visitor asked for more information with regard to announcements about which grades might have two classrooms next year, given the increased enrollment number. Principal Biel advised patience as enrollment numbers were changing almost daily. The importance of meeting the need for opening a second class and ensuring new family integration and acclimation to St. Alexander School was also mentioned. Principal Biel ensured the Council that these things were being thoughtfully considered, and encouraged current School families to be willing to do ‘the little things’ to make sure transitioning families are successfully integrated into, and welcomed to, St. Alexander School. The Office of Catholic Schools asked St. Alexander School not to actively market to families at Our Lady of the Ridge School or Incarnation School, so enrollment numbers and how to handle them going forward are the subjects of ongoing discussion among the School and Parish leadership. Father Michniewicz provided guidance to all present by saying “Let them [Incarnation and Our Lady of the Ridge families] heal. We will be here when they are ready.”

Father Michniewicz ended the meeting with a Closing Prayer.

Adjournment:

Council Member Dougherty motioned and Council Member Anderzunas seconded the motion to adjourn. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 27, 2018 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Nicholson