

St. Joseph's School Home and School Association
Meeting Minutes (Virtual)
7 pm, Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Present

Greg Wesely, Principal
Betsy Joyce, President
Hilary Lamusga, VP
Marie Bitzer
Bri Brekke
Shannon Campbell

Laura Cashill
Jenna Dwyer
Alex Fitzer
Christy Frost
Emily Gainor
Brenna Lynn

Leslie Miller
Sara Rogers
Jennifer Wilson

Red text = Action item for one or more people

1. Greg led us in prayer.
2. H&S Commitment: We will not count this year towards the typical two-year commitment, as it's been so unusual. Please email/text Betsy if you want to pass on your position for next year, or if you are interested in a new position. Please also email/text to confirm you will be staying on H&S next year, moving to the next grade up.
3. New Family Transfers, New Kinder Families and New Preschool Families Contact Project
 - a. We are looking for reps to help contact 61 total families via phone for a brief introduction and check-in to provide community support to new families.
 - b. 8-10 volunteers from H&S would be wonderful. Not making this a requirement because not all are comfortable making phone calls but we appreciate all the help we can get!
 - c. Talking Points will be provided. We will try to pair you with kids in similar grade levels.
 - d. Email Betsy if you are interested in helping out with this project so you can help make connections and build community! Or, if you know someone who would be great at this, please let Betsy know.
4. Spring Used Uniform/Spirit Wear Sale
 - a. Bri Brekke and Sara Rogers are organizing this for Sunday, March 21, noon to 1:30 in the cafeteria.
 - b. Donations are welcome! Any gently used uniform clothes, spirit wear, or even holiday apparel (ugly Christmas sweaters, Valentine's Day, etc.) that your children have outgrown can be donated by dropping them off in the school's front stairwell.
5. Park/Outdoor Socials
 - a. Our goal is to give families, and parents in particular, a chance to be with each other to build community in a year when that has been extremely difficult.

- b. Grade reps can organize park playdates for younger grades (K-3, maybe 4?) and older grades could meet at Mendota Village for Cold Stone (or any other outdoor place that you think would be fun and have space).
- c. If grade reps want to organize one in April, please only do it by each classroom, not an entire grade. In later spring (May and June), we can organize these events for the whole grade and push information out through Home and School or the office.

6. Spring Break Teacher Appreciation Send-Off

- a. Looking for a cute, Spring-type idea to show our appreciation. Greg mentioned a candy bouquet; Leslie mentioned a cup with tea and other ideas; Hilary mentioned individual popcorn bags with a cute tag. If you have other ideas or would like to help, please email Betsy!

7. Greg's Updates

- a. Dates and times are finalized for first communion and confirmation.
- b. Rosary and stations of the cross are being done throughout Lent with different grades.
- c. A special service project for the spring will be a "No Child Wet Behind," a diaper drive (specifically sizes 5 and 6) for Wakota: A Guiding Star Center.
- d. We are making adjustments to protocols with more outside time available. The swings are down and basketball hoops are back up, and the orange fence is around the playground is now gone. More updates will be in the Friday letter.
- e. We have been putting travel guidelines in the Friday letter, although we don't have specific rules, to request families do what they can to stay safe and help keep our school community safe and open as they travel over spring break.
- f. Administrators are in the process of speaking with the local police department to discuss what should happen if unrest comes across the river once again, so we have some plans in place.
- g. Enrollment update: Tuition agreements will be sent out in the next few weeks. Our retention rate is very positive. Coming into this school year we had 8% growth, and next year, the interest is strong again, especially in lower grades but also some in middle and upper grades. We currently have 44 preschoolers enrolled for next year (please pass along the program info to anyone you think might be interested!). Our K-8 school is currently at 355 students for next year (enrollment for this school year was 336). This is great! Please continue to pray, as we do have space in all grades.
- h. Questions/Answers
 - i. Would school times go back to normal (ending at 3:40 instead of 2:40)? Greg said likely yes; it's tied to busing through the district.
 - ii. Would middle school end up going back to switching classrooms? Greg said again, likely yes, due to the need for those students to move and have those extra interactions.

- iii. Is there a preschool director position open? Preschool does not currently have a director (besides Greg). It is a current topic for discussion among administration for what to do for next year and will likely be driven by enrollment.
- iv. Will we be 100% in person next year? Greg hopes so! The school is meant to be in-person and that's what we do best. We hope that the pandemic situation and guidelines by August allow us to discontinue any distance learning.
- v. Last week there was an attempted kidnapping of a girl on her way to school at Heritage, just a block or two away from our school. Is anything being done? We have seen West St. Paul police patrolling a bit more, and we will be in contact with them about this as well just to make sure they will be aware of our school and our walkers/bikers. We are also attempting to make sure student crosswalks are safe. Could this be addressed as a safety tip in announcements or something similar? Is there any communication with parents or discussion with students? Greg is asking for more information from the police department but we do want to remind our students, even just when they're playing outside on our grounds.
- i. School calendar for next year: Labor Day is late and District 197 is starting even later than that Tuesday, so we will likely stick with what we did this past year and start a week earlier than Labor Day. Stay tuned, as this info will be confirmed soon. We will also have a separate spring break and then Good Friday/Easter Monday off next year.
- j. Groves has been going extremely well and has been embraced by our staff, and will move to include third grade next year.

Minutes submitted by Sara Rogers

Minutes approved by Betsy Joyce and Hilary Lamusga