

The first regular meeting for the 2020-2021 school year of the St. Joseph School, Board of Education, also known as School Board, was held on Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 7:00 pm virtually using Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

School Board Members Present: Mrs. Faith Dobson, Mrs. Rebecca Olinger, Mrs. Deirdre Savarese, Mrs. Alicia Renard, Mr. John Alfano, Mrs. Amy Day, Mr. John Reisenweber, Mr. Matthew Pitman, Mrs. Trisha Bankert, Mrs. Corrinne Eck, Fr. Steve Fernandes, Mrs. Erin Maiolino, Mrs. Kristy Baker.

Meeting called to order at 7:08 pm. Fr. Steve Fernandes offered the opening prayer Faith Dobson began with welcoming the newest members of the Board - Mr. John Reisenweber, Mr. Matthew Pitman and alternate, Mrs. Trisha Bankert, followed by board member introductions. Faith reminded all the Board members to remain supportive of the school and its mission as they are approached by parents who may have concerns or questions about the school. Everyone was reminded to encourage parents to reach out to their classroom teacher before engaging Mrs. Eck or Fr. Steve if they have specific concerns. As members of the board it is important we remain professional and assert ourselves as leaders during this time by fostering open and appropriate communication throughout our school community.

Corinne Eck provided the Principal's Report. She stated that the teachers and administration are doing an amazing job navigating through both in-school instruction as well as Connected Education. The children are all doing a great job following the new rules that have been enforced to keep everyone safe. She focused on six areas: State of the School, Faculty, Re-opening plan, 2020-2021 Initiatives, Expectations for the Board, and School Goals.

State of the School

- Enrollment is 250 students to date.
- Several families chose to leave SJY for different reasons: Pre-K was full, enrollment into other Cyber schools costing no tuition, enrollment in regular public school due to financial needs, relocation of the family.
- Connected Education for those enrolled started Zooming in with their class this week, things have been going smoothly. Currently, K is the only grade with no virtual students. Students enrolled in Connected Education per grade are the following: First = 4, Second = 4, Third = 4, Fourth = 1, Fifth = 2, and Sixth = 4.

Faculty

- There are 12 homeroom teachers, two of which are new - Mrs. Pirrotta in 5B and Mrs. Smith in 1A. There are also 4 special teachers - Art, Spanish, Music, Gym/Library
- Teachers are working exceptionally hard to help with the After-Hours duties, planning for the school day and doing all those things needed to combat the spread of COVID. The teachers will be compensated for their 12 days per year that they are helping in the After-School Program.
- Mrs. Wozniak is still present each day and has worked very hard to make sure all activities are social distanced and follow the CDC guidelines.

Re-Opening Plan

- The 3rd revision is due this week. The changes are very minimal. Changes that were made are as follows:
 - Allow for flexible desk arrangement with new plastic shields - 4-6 feet distance facing and 3-6 feet non-facing.
 - The mounted hand sanitizing stations in each room are now gallon sized hand pumps stationed outside each room.
 - The new recommendations include

- No use of lanyards on the playground (if children are using them to attach to their masks).
- Virtual tours for new student candidates, sanitizing training was provided by the diocese, mask breaks are recommended throughout the day, preferably outside.
- COVID notices are to be signed by all parents.
- Papers completed in class now only need 24 hours prior to being handled before they can be sent home with the student.

2020-2021 Initiatives

- The school has had 3-4 instances where children were out for a day or two and then returned – not related to Covid-19 - no reported cases in the school. Great job to all teachers, parents, and kids for working hard to keep the virus out of SJY!
- Mrs. Eck's goal for this year is mitigating the virus!
- Mrs. Eck stated that parents have been asking what they can do to help this school year. She recommended that the best thing is to remember to fill in the Student Check in Form each day before 7:15am. This can be found on the website and there is also a quick link to it. (instructions were provided ITL). In addition, Mrs. Eck stated that parents should continue to refer to the ITL weekly for updates and important information. A lot of times we have parents emailing and asking about questions/procedures when this information has already been provided via ITL.
- The goal is for ITL to go out Friday, but it isn't always happening. Some people have reported that it has been going to junk email or it not all being pushed out to parents at the time it is supposed to. The consensus about the new ITL format has been that things are extremely easy to maneuver; especially for those who are viewing it on a mobile device.
- Deirdre asked if it would help to get the grade ambassadors started so that it may take some pressure from faculty from having to respond to questions that can be handled by the ambassadors. Kristy stated Yes we will be getting that started very soon, she was waiting to see what happened with the reopening of the school. Mrs. Eck is in full support of getting this moving ASAP.
- It was asked if the school was getting reimbursed for the cleaning supplies, desk shields, face masks and hand sanitizer. Mrs. Eck stated that the school did receive money from our Title I. kids and the CARES Act. At the very last minute the government did pull funding from us and we quickly had to find the money to purchase the desk shields (which was why we did not have them at the start of school). Mrs. Eck stated that she graciously received a check in the mail that was enough money to purchase all the desk shields that were needed for the students.
- Mrs. Eck stated that we will continue to work diligently to provide SJY Connected Education to families who may need it.
- Professional Development is focused on technology/online teaching options.
- STAR Assessment replaces ITBS for standardized testing. This is to begin Sept 21 and continues until October 2
 - Children are assessed three times per year, September, January, and May.

Expectations of from the Board

- Support Kristy with any marketing needs
- Continue to reach out to the community to increase engagement. So far, our school has gotten very positive feedback from the other school and community as to how we have handled the re-opening of school and mitigating the virus. Kudos to all!!!

School Goals

- Continue to provide rigorous academics through the pandemic

- Continue to maintain a social/emotional balance of teachers and students through the pandemic
- Remember to KEEP THE FAITH!

John Alfano and Erin Maiolino presented the Finances update:

- It was reiterated that tuition charged does not make up the cover of expenses the school has. The parish subsidizes expenses to make up for the discounted tuition. The subsidy amount is budgeted at 21% of the weekly offertory. The church offerings unfortunately have been down since March when the pandemic hit. As of now, Mass is not up to even 50% of participation at this point. The goal is to eliminate the shortfall. This past spring, a hard review of the budget was completed, and everyone is hopeful that this goal can be met. The prior year's tuition was based on 310 students however this year it was based on 250 students. It is important that we maintain these students so that we can make our revenue. To date, the budgets have been fairly on point with what was expected.
- Fundraising piece is huge key revenue generator.

Kristy Baker wrapped up the Board meeting and presented the Development update.

- Kristy asked for those Board members who wished to reach out via phone calls to new families to please get in contact with her and she would set us up with parents to contact.
- Kristy stated the Annual Fun and Race for Education money was down this year however people continue to send in money
- There will be NO golf outing this year.
- The new website is coming along well, those involved seemed pleased with the updates and it should be shared this month.
- The student ambassadors have been selected and they are already coming up with great ideas for the year and are very excited for what's to come.
- There will be a family event in October - trunk or treat. Details to follow.

Waiting lists for each grade

- Currently 5 students on a waiting list in 1st grade, 2 students for 4th grade
- For the most part the classes are all full
- To open a second classroom, we would need to have 18 for each class.
- On a related note, the current 5th grade class is extremely large. This has been the case with this class since K.
- Smaller class sizes = significant increase in tuition.

Fr. Steve offered a closing prayer and the meeting adjourned at 8:33pm.