The fifth regular meeting for the 2020-2021 school year of the St. Joseph School, Board of Education, also known as the School Board, was held on Thursday, May 13, 2021 at St. Joseph’s Church. The meeting began with a prayer led by Fr. Steve at 7:03 pm.

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

The meeting began with a Finance Repot from John Alfano. The update he presented was accurate through April. Every line item is on target with where it should be in regards to the budget. The budget appears to be in a much better situation than it was last year. Erin provided a brief overview into what next year’s budget looks like. It appears even more flexible than last year. Tuition is up, due to enrollment being higher. This is a great position to be in, as our enrollment numbers have not looked this high in a few years. Everything for next year’s forecast seems on par however we may spend more money on conferences and travel next year. This year there were no conferences or travel expenses due to the pandemic. Erin did suggest encouraging families to donate to the church collections. Many families think that their tuition is donating however it isn’t. She noted that very few families from school contribute to the collections at mass. The church collections have decreased as some people are still not attending church due to the pandemic or have had a reduction in income and can not afford to tithe as they have in the past.

Rebecca asked, “Since we absorbed St Joseph- Dallastown kids do we get funding from their church.?” We do not. Since Holy Trinity and St Joseph’s Dallastown combined and those students attend Holy Trinity, we are ineligible to get the assistance from St. Joseph’s Dallastown Parish.

Deirdre inquired about the church educating Parishioners where the money from collections goes so that all have a better understanding of how their money is distributed. She suggested putting this kind of information once a month in the church bulletin so that families were more aware. Erin stated that this was an option that could be looked into. There is a collection envelope that is distributed twice a month that goes solely to the school.

Alicia asked if the church is able to email parishioners with this type of information. It may be beneficial to attempt this in the future. Erin noted that a lot of people don’t update their church information with updated phone and emails, making it very difficult to send emails out as many get kicked back for being undeliverable.

The second session of the meeting Kristy Baker presented the Development and Communication’s Information. The Annual fund has surpassed our goal of $33,000 and at this time the total donations are $48, 225. Gifts continue to trickle in.

Race for Education was extremely successful despite the windy weather and no Grandparents Day. The total donations so far are $42,131. This is the highest number of donations in four years. This year we had an exceptional amount of corporate sponsors which was quite evident by amount of names on the back of the shirts this year.

The Black and Gold Times newspaper comes out monthly and the group of 6th grade girls in charge of this are doing phenomenal. They have meetings with Kristy and have worked hard to meet deadlines and put together great stories for the school community. This is sent out with ITL and also on the school website.

Uniform Consignment Event is coming up May 27th. Information ITL.

The 6th grade class is working on raising money for a GaGa Ball Pit and painting activities on the parking lot for their Legacy gift. Donations are coming in and the children and are continuing to raise the money with Dollar For Dare. Information also regarding this can be found ITL.

Rebecca asked how the Kitchen Fundraiser went. It went well, as enough monies was raised to purchase two new cafeteria tables and the shields needed for the cafeteria. Mrs. Eck just announced that all breakfast and lunch will continue to be free in the 2021-2022 school year. The Board suggested that Kristy continue this fundraising twice a year as it was very successful in helping to get our kitchen staff the important things they need in order to get the kiddos back to eating in the cafeteria.

Currently we have 28 new families coming in next school year. This puts the enrollment numbers close to where we were 2 years ago. Kristy continues to push for more K and Pre-K half day enrollments.

Next year’s 5th and 3rd grade will be one class.

During K evaluations Kristy has come up with a Picture Backdrop for parents to take pictures of their children and post to social media. Social media continues to be a great way to advertise our school. Having parents share posts on Facebook and Instagram helps to get the word out.

SPE next year, we already had 1 and Kristy anticipates getting another. Getting this type of funding is great for stories. We will be able to share this type of new in the church bulletin, social media and at registration.

Mrs. Eck- Principal’s Report.

Since the report was distributed we are proud to announce we have had a COVID free week. Currently, we have had 24 cases since the beginning of October 2020, with only one case being attributed to attendance at SJY. The rest were contracted outside of school. A few students did have to quarantine but other than that we have been successful in staying open and only having to close for one half day.

Mrs. Eck is not sure about what the plan is for next year as far as COVID restrictions. The diocese is in the planning stages of creating an adjusted COVID safety plan for the 2021-2022 school year. SJY will adopt a new plan in August. She is pretty sure that we will not be using the desk shields next year. At this time, 68% of the faculty and staff are vaccinated.

A 2021-2022 calendar was provided to the Board at the meeting.

Next year, two faculty members and one staff member will not be returning. Mrs. Painter, Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Medina. Mrs. Eck is looking to hire a part-time Preschool teacher and 3 Primary teachers for Grades 1 and 2. She is currently in the interview process and hopes to offer employment for three positions by the end of the month. We continue to seek applicants for one primary teacher and the nurse position.

The wait list has grown and we are able to have (2) 1st grades and (2) 2nd grades.

The school was able to receive CARES funding from 8 school districts. In addition, the LIU did come through with a grant for SJY as well.

Year to date, we have been provided $57,625 in CARES Funding for the support of our students during the pandemic. Below is the breakdown of how the money was used.

$6,650 for Protection and sanitization.

$41,972 for learning and technology

$9,000 for salaries

In the future, private schools will now be given funding based on all students in the school and not just those that are considered Title I.

Mrs. Eck has applied for a grant that has not yet been approved. If approved this will be in the amount of $115,470.

Final standardized testing, known as the STAR testing was done this week. The results will be included in the next meetings report. Mrs. Eck did a quick peek at this report and we are in the 80% for reading section. The math results, not good but she expected that.

Mrs. Eck and the staff are close to picking the new math series that will be used in the 2021-2022 school year. There are two more companies scheduled to come in to go over their program with the staff. Faith asked if the Board could see the list of Math programs that the staff is considering and hearing about why the program was chosen. There has been a lot of talk about the Math program at our school and how for years our scores have always been lower than they should be. Mrs. Eck graciously stated, that she would be glad to share the Math choices with the board to review. Matt Pitman then asked if this new program would be more technology based to conform to the way Math is being taught. Absolutely, was Mrs. Ecks response. In fact, one of the programs that was presented to them had very little technology and the nixed this one right away for that reason.

Mr. Breen new superintendent for diocese has initiated a new Vitality Index that the school will participate in. Beginning in 2021-22 school year, the Diocesan Education Office will be providing a Vitality Index for the school in diocese to complete yearly. It will be used as a reporting tool that seeks information about the school an its planned growth in the areas. These areas include mission, academics, financial stability and faith. This is all in the draft stage with the first report due to the Education Office in August. Mrs. Eck foresees this will be a good tool for SJY to measure and guide us in goals moving forward.

Lastly, using the grant monies from this year, we hope to be able to provide one to one technology for the 5th and 6th grade students. We are integrating technology into the regular classroom as a learning tool for research, performance and projects.

Faith ended the meeting by thanking Deirdre Savarese, Alicia Renard and Matthew Pitman for their service to the Board as they will not be returning next year. A notice will go out in the church bulletin and ITL about positions being open on the board as well as ITL. Faith Dobson will remain as President with Rebecca Olinger as VP. Amy Day will continue as Secretary with John Alfano as the Finance Chair. John Reisenweber will also be returning. Trish Banker who was a non-voting alternate for this year will also be coming on as a voting member.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm with a closing prayer led by Fr. Steve.