

St. Gabriel Consolidated School PTO Meeting Minutes

May 12, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Katrina H., PTO president at 7:08 pm.

Call to order/welcome – Katrina H.

- Opening prayer was led by Mrs. S. – Those in attendance were asked to sit quietly with the Lord. The Memorare was said following this quiet time.

Presentation of gift to Mr. Epplen – Katrina H.

- Mr. E. was presented with restaurant gift cards as well as a home depot gift cards
- Before the presentation, Katrina made a few remarks about Mr. E.: Our school is blessed to have a person that interacts with our kids every day. He is a wonderful leader for the staff and students alike. We feel extremely blessed to have Joe E. as principal of SGCS.

Principal's report – Mr. E.

- Accreditation process – we are in the process of finishing up the paperwork. We have submitted a request for an onsite visit for the 1st week in December. The accreditation process is a good time to look at what we've done well and the things that we need to do better. Once this is finished, we will not have to do another accreditation for 7 years.
- Blue Ribbon Schools update – We are in the running for the blue ribbon. There were 138 schools that submitted an application. Of those, 50 are selected for further review. SGCS was in the 50 selected. When you are selected, the application is usually sent back with a note to correct a few things. Ours was sent back with a note that said to re-submit as is. So, that is very promising.
- Race for education – was very successful. The committee is still in the process of counting the money.
- Funfest is May 28. It will begin with an outdoor Mass at 10. It is nice to see families attend this. The 7th and 8th grade will be at Summit Park this year for the activities after the mass. Last year, the 7th and 8th grade wound up at Washington Park because we didn't know we had to reserve the space Summit Park and there was a preschool that had reserved it last year.
- Enrollment – everyday things change. As of May 12, we are up about 5 over what they were last year. We are still giving tours. We are getting calls from as far away as Pennsylvania and Texas from families moving into town. While we are not uncomfortable with the overall enrollment, Kindergarten is a concern. We were at 48, but a set of twins pulled out and another family. We are currently at 45 for next year. The kindergarten families that are choosing to go elsewhere are not families with siblings here. We are advertising, but it is always tricky about where to put our advertising dollars. Currently, we have the exclusive Catholic school advertisement in the welcome wagon brochure for West Chester. We have a coupon for 50.00 off the registration fee.

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- Feasibility study – We will be having a meeting with pastors tomorrow to move this project along. This has taken longer than expected because a couple of Pastors meetings have been cancelled.
- Mr. E. turned the podium over to Mark G. to speak in detail about the Feasibility Study.

SGCS 21: Feasibility Study – Mark G.

- Mark introduced himself. Mark is the President of the advisory commission, which is made up of all of the priests from the 5 parishes, Mrs. S., and lay people from each parish. The commission meets bi-monthly. The advisory commission doesn't make decisions, but advises the priests and Mr. E.. A subcommittee was formed to talk about this issue: SGCS 21: Feasibility Study. The following people are on this subcommittee: Julie A., Aimee D., Mark G., Judy., Ann E., Rich H., and Phuc B. Mark has been on the advisory commission for 7 or 8 years.
- Mark mentioned that it has taken a long time to get certain priests to throw their support behind this, so this is a feat in itself. Once this happened, the commission contacted Schuster and Associates. This firm has a lot of experience with other Archdiocesan schools. They are a one stop firm. They do feasibility, architectural, etc. The 1st step in the process is to raise money so that Schuster can do a feasibility study. Notices went out in Thursday envelope about this. We have gotten a good response.
- The next step will be for Schuster & Associates to meet with us and to walk the grounds to put the feasibility study together.
- We really need support from the SGCS families. The priests and archdiocese are watching to see if the parents really support this. People are encouraged to contact anyone on the commission with questions. All those at the meeting are encouraged to get people to fill out the feasibility study form that went home in the Thursday envelope, even if they can't send in money. The form needs to be sent in to say, hey we support this. There are forms available on-line.
- Mark talked a little about the school. We do a great job marketing our school, have great technology and great teachers, but when you walk in the building you get a feel for what we need.....we have art in a cart and several lunch periods because the lunch room is small, etc. As far as enrollment, the numbers we can pull from are great because we cover a large area since we are a consolidated school.
- Joan V. asked: "Do you know what the time table is? Friday, we cut off contributions?" Mark responded that Schuster & Associates wrote a 5 page letter to Rich. Mark doesn't know that it gave a specific time frame, but the letter is very detailed on what they are going to do. If they're working on a flat fee basis, they're not going to take forever. The real question is when are we going to start the capital campaign? Mark likes to think it won't be more than a couple of months away. If all goes well at the Thursday (May 13) meeting, Mark intends to call Schuster and Associates immediately.
- Pat K. asked: "What is the scope of what we are looking for, what is the implication to village of Glendale? Village has to approve any building." Mark answered that Schuster and Associates will definitely look into this. Mark can't imagine there being a big issue. As he put it "If you can

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put a pizza parlor across the street in a historical building, I would think we can add onto our school.” When Schuster walks the grounds, they learn about you...what you need. The scope is a combination of their advice and our input. Decisions won’t be made until they present us with 2 or 3 options with the cost. Mark mentioned that some people think this is just about a gym. It isn’t. Our biggest problem is space. This study is not to just go out and get a gym. The presentation that the advisory commission made to the pastors is on the website.

- Someone else stated: “It would help to know what the overarching goal is here. Right now it is not stated.” Mark answered: “We’re out to improve our campus and update it...that is the goal. If we are not going forward, we are going backward. We’re asking Schuster to do an overall feasibility study to incorporate the whole school. We did a lot of research to get input and that feeds into the feasibility.
- Elizabeth C. observed: “We had numerous people that are very confused about what this is about. For example, someone said there was no way they were going to support this because we would level the school.” She heard someone else say that we were building another school somewhere else. She also mentioned that people aren’t going to the website or the committee. Mark responded that those rumors were false. We want to improve the overall facility and the primary component of that is building a structure. We can’t send out a flyer that says we’re building a gym, give us money. Certain people would say no. We have 48% of the families that support this right now. We have the money to do the study, but we want to see more support. It is the sub-committee’s job to help people understand. Once people understand, Mark said he would be shocked if we don’t have 90% of the families supporting this.
- There was talk about how to reach more people. Mark said that he talked to a dad at the sports banquet that didn’t know this was going on at all. His wife reads the Thursday envelope information and the emails. Lynda Groh said perception is 9/10 reality. Emails and letters haven’t gotten the results. We need to go a different way. The committee, she suggested, needs be very blunt.
- Mr. E. concluded the SGCS 21 Feasibility Study discussion. He said he thinks this discussion is good. Procedures take a long time. Critical things need to happen. First there is the meeting with the pastors on May 13 and then an advisory committee meeting on Monday night. After these 2 meetings, we will have a clear direction about what we want to say to the school community. Mr. E. commented on the rumors. He mentioned that a few years back Glendale was going to tear down the grade school and there was a cry to not tear it down. Older schools are monument so education. The current SGCS School will not be razed. St. Maximilian and St. John will not build a school because they each owe a 2 million debt on their churches. Mr. E. also noted that the last time updates were made to the school was in 1959 with the principal’s office. This school will hold 450, but we won’t achieve that if we stand still. Can’t feed 450 with cafeteria we have now.
- Mark spoke with families at the sports banquet and he will be speaking with families at funfest.

President’s Report – Katrina H.

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- Katrina asked people to pray for SGCS 21
- Big thing is the PTO reimbursements for year. Martha is trying to get expenses wound up for year. Please submit your expenses by June 2.
- Last day to order SCRIP IS May 21.
- The PTO really needs people to step up with volunteer positions. We have openings for the junior high play chair, sunshine committee.

Treasurer Report – Martha D.

- We are doing well so far. We have done really well thanks to CNO. We budgeted for a gross profit of \$25,000, but we came in at \$35,000. So far expenses for CNO have been about \$9,000. We are definitely ahead of the game. We are still going to be wrapping up the year. There will be a lot coming in the next couple of weeks.
- Scrip has done well: \$3,500 above what we had budgeted for the year. Catholic school week has also come in below budget.
- Motion to approve was made by Jamie W. and seconded by Laura E..

Secretary's Report – Paula B.

- Asked for a motion to waive the reading of the minutes. Motion was made by Jamie W. and seconded by Pat K..

OLD BUSINESS

- Lynda Groh and Joan V. were presented with gift cards by Katrina H. for all their exceedingly hard work with Cougars Night Out.
- CNO WRAP UP – Joan V., Lynda G.
 - They thanked all the CNO committee chairs and Mrs. H. for the table decorations.
 - Lynda and Joan volunteered to chair the next CNO (for the 2011-2012 school year).
 - They talked about the CNO feedback surveys. There were 45 surveys returned. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. There were a couple of areas of criticism.....checkout and different format for dinner. There were also comments about not knowing about the website. It was hard for Stacy to manage the invitations and the website. For the next CNO, maybe we can find someone to manage the website.
- Annette B. mentioned that the thank you notes were passed out by classroom on May 11. If you didn't get one, please let her know.

NEW BUSINESS

- Scrip Program - Adelaide L.

This coming year, without CNO we are going to try to encourage participation in the SCRIP program because it contributes a lot to the PTO budget. The last day to order for this school

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year is May 21. A lot of people will be running here and there and going on trips. Consider buying fast food gift cards for the summer.

- Kudos – Adelaide L.. The PTO want to thank the following people
 - The Butlers for the flowers around SGCS
 - Sheri K. for 7th grade spring play
 - Brian and Carolyn R. for Everybody Counts
 - Monica and John T. for Catholic Schools Week
 - Jamie W. for Race for Education
 - Julie A. for the teacher appreciation luncheon
 - Brian R. and Bob K. for Funfest coming up
- PTO CHAIRS – Katrina H.

There are several chair openings. The big one is chair of the Jr. High plays. We are also looking for volunteers to chair the Sunshine Committee, Split the Pot and Ronald McDonald. We are having trouble getting families to step up and make dinners. If we can't get someone to chair this, we might have to give this up. Contact Adelaide or Katrina if interested in any of the chair positions.

- Mentor Program – Elizabeth C.
 - She is not sure of the changes that will take place yet.
 - Her biggest push is for the kindergarten families. She will try to get the kids to meet each other over the summer. We didn't do the mentor program for the kindergarten class because we didn't have enough people to sign up.
 - A volunteer form is in this Thursday envelope. There is a changed question on the form which asks if there is a family that you know that is new that you can be a go to person for.
 - There is not much time involved in being a mentor....just making a phone call and meeting a couple of times at someplace like a park. It's a great way to meet kids in the class.
 - There are 26 new families coming in.
- New PTO Board was sworn in by Mr. E.. Adelaide L., President. Rebecca L., Vice-President. Martha D., Treasurer. Paula B., Secretary.

Cougar - The coveted Cougar goes to Mrs. K.'s 2nd Grade for having the most parents in attendance.
Split the Pot – Winning ticket was held by Lynda G..

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Paula B., PTO Secretary.