

St. Gabriel Consolidated School PTO

Meeting Minutes January 11, 2006 7:00 PM

1. SGCS PTO president Melinda Y. called to order the second SGCS PTO meeting of the 2005-2006 school year at 7:05 p.m. in St. Mary's Hall.
 - Attendees were reminded of childcare available in the Library, thanks to Michelle D. and Red Cross-certified babysitters.
 - Attendees were also reminded to sign in so their children's' rooms would get credit for their attendance.
 - Mrs. Angie C. led the opening prayer.
2. SGCS PTO secretary Patty K. requested a motion to waive the reading of the September 14, 2005, SGCS PTO minutes. Motion by Virginia B., second by Karin Z. Attendees unanimously approved the motion.
 - Patty apologized for SGCS e-mail snafu, and explained the problem is being worked through the e-mail list server provider. She believes Cincinnati Roadrunner customers are affected, and will provide an update once the problem is identified. She is working to install an interactive calendar to serve as an interim solution.
 - Melinda announced that PTO office hours would change to once per month beginning in February. PTO office hours will be scheduled the first Friday of February, March, April and May. Patty reminded attendees that questions might also be directed to PTO e-mail, reminders@stgabeschool.org.
3. SGCS principal, Joe Epplen, presented the Principals Report.
 - The next few Thursday Envelopes will be chock-full of information about upcoming events at school, according to Mr. Epplen, so parents are encouraged to pay special attention to what comes home.
 - Catholic Schools Week is coming up. SGCS will have an open house February 1 from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. This is the time of year when SGCS spends time recruiting new families to our school. SGCS is planning to have a new brochure, and displays at all of the parishes. If you are a St. Max parishioner, Mr. Epplen encourages you to be at Hospitality Sunday, which is after masses January 21 and 22, to help promote SGCS. He says it is vital to take the time to talk to friends and neighbors about SGCS. While SGCS is in good shape, Mr. Epplen noted that other Catholic Schools are being consolidated, and he would like families to work hard to maintain the viability of our school. You can do so by participating in Catholic Schools Week, inviting friends and neighbors to our open house, and encouraging Catholic education wherever possible.
 - Mr. Epplen introduced a new project underway: a new school sign is being manufactured. Plans call for the new sign to go where the old sign was. The work will be done during spring break. Additionally, he described other projects going on in the physical plant, including new playground equipment to replace older apparatus. Jan Horne is spearheading this project.
 - Though information is not complete, Mr. Epplen shared preliminary results of how SGCS students have done in high school admissions tests. SGCS has 43 eighth graders; to date,

we have had nine girls qualify as St. Julie Billiart honorees at Mount Notre Dame; also, four SGCS students qualify to be admitted with distinction at Moeller; one SGCS student qualified for full tuition at St. Ursula; and five students achieved “Top 40” status in Roger Bacon admissions testing, including the top place finisher. Mr. Epplen said that admissions information is still pending from St. Ursuline and a few other schools, but that he can report such outstanding preliminary results is a measure of SGCS’ strong academics.

4. Melinda Y. directed attendees to a handout that included news from many of the SGCS PTO’s 18 active committees, and then introduced several committees that wished to report in person.
 - Karin Z., chairperson of the Cougars Night Out committee, mentioned CNO committees are working hard to present a great night of Mardi Gras fun. She reported that response has been slow, and encouraged all to sign up, and to invite friends, relatives and neighbors so that we can top last year’s attendance of around 200 people. She reminded everyone to look for tuition raffle tickets in this Thursday’s Thursday Envelope, and listed other activities such as split-the-pot, basket raffles and silent auction. Silent Auction co-chair Nancy Y. thanked those who have donated to the silent auction; last year, she said, the silent auction portion of CNO raised almost \$10,000. This year, she said, 140 items have been donated to date compared to last year’s total of 110 items. She also said this year’s items are of a better variety, and include sports tickets, hotel weekends, jewelry, Dr. Phil trip, and front-row seats to graduation and Kindergarten Finale. CNO is not a cliquish crowd, she said, and encouraged mentors to invite their mentor families to attend with them. Finally, she reminded people to sign up as soon as possible in order to get an accurate count for the caterers.
 - Reporting for Catholic Schools Week chairperson Aimee D., SGCS PTO vice president Ann E. provided an update on the committee’s work. The theme, she reminded, is Character, Compassion and Values. Parishes will kick-off the week with special mention at all masses the weekend of January 28-29, except for St. Max, which is the 21-22. Display boards will be placed in churches, and volunteer families will be on hand to talk to perspective families. Aimee hopes any interested families will contact her or their parish representative to volunteer. Also, a school assembly featuring The Magician with a Mission, Dough Henning, is scheduled for Catholic Schools Week. Our service project is collecting donations for Reach Out Lakota. Our open house is February 1 from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. The all-school Mass is Thursday, February 2, at 9:30 a.m. at St. Max. Parents are encouraged to attend. Student mementos this year will be tee shirts featuring our school name and Catholic Schools Week logo. Students may be allowed to wear them instead of uniforms during Catholic Schools Week. Those who have not turned in their paper indicating size should please do so as soon as possible.
 - Melinda introduced three people working closely with Mr. Epplen to get our SGCS name out into the community, and to promote a positive, consistent message: the SGCS Marketing committee, headed by Nancy Y., Laura H. and Aimee D. Speaking on behalf of the committee, Nancy Y. stated the committees charge as promoting the school’s values and success in the community, and asked for help and support in spreading the message of SGCS as a great school, and raising community awareness. She mentioned the committee’s work on a new school brochure, and a new system in place to capture the accomplishments of our SGCS alumnae. These will help promote SGCS to new families. Please display your SGCS license plate holder and magnet, she

- asked, and look for a new school video and some photographs we will be able to use in successfully promoting SGCS.
5. In Old Business, Melinda introduced the new PTO budget and PTO financial information. Reminding attendees that this discussion was tabled at September's meeting pending extensive review and re-work by the SGCS board, Melinda explained that the Board could now present exactly how much money we have, and how much we need to have in our bank account; recommend an amount to keep in a rainy day (reserve) fund; and recommend an amount to hold in reserve from year to year. Emphasizing we are in good financial shape and that our budget is no longer in deficit, Melinda pointed out other significant differences between September's financial report and tonight's: an increase in expected income from Cougars Night Out; an increase in Scrip income, an increase in M&M income; and the elimination of appreciation tchotchkes representing a savings of about \$500. She thanked Coreen and Wendell B. for migrating financial data from several sources onto one financial platform, and noted the Browns reconciled our checkbook—something that had not been completed during our recent spate of three treasurers in a little more than one year. Teri D. asked about bank service charges, especially with regard to bounced checks; Melinda explained that we have not been forced to pay any bank fees for bounced checks; in fact, there was only one last year, and the family that issued that particular check was asked to cover the bank fees associated with the check. Nancy Y. motioned to approve the revised budget; Jill C. seconded the motion. PTO membership unanimously agreed to approve the revised SGCS PTO budget for the '05-'06 school year.
 6. No new business.
 7. General announcements:
 - Melinda announced that the current Funfest chairpersons were resigning their positions after this year, and that new chairpersons were needed. She said that a reminder would be forthcoming in a Thursday Envelope announcement.
 - Melinda asked that the PTO membership begin to think of people whom they would like to nominate for PTO Board positions for next year. The one difference in doing so this year is that the treasurer would need to have some computer skills, and access to a computer at home or work.
 - Ann E. thanked Wendell and Coreen B. again for their hundreds of volunteer hours meticulously reconciling our bank books, financial situation and budget, and giving the SGCS PTO a financial memory so we can keep accurate track year-to-year. They walked in and took control of the books, and the budget is balanced because of them. She also thanked parents and room parent teams for hard work during Christmas season. Mrs. Bethune was thanked for the wonderful Christmas shows she worked so hard to produce. And once again, Ann thanked everyone for being involved, for that is what makes our school special.
 8. In Open Forum, an attendee wondered if SGCS was getting rid of its current playground equipment as part of the playground upgrade. Mr. Epplen said it is being replaced, and some of the older, dangerous pieces have already been replaced. There are times, he added, when the Board of Health comes in and we have to be accountable for this equipment. There are pieces coming loose, that are old, and we have been talking about this for two or three years. This will be paid for out of the capital improvement fund. We have a building advisory committee that works on a cyclical basis and this has been one of the things it has talked about. In a follow-up question, another attendee asked if volunteers

were needed; Mr. Epplen said he is sure Jan H. will seek volunteers for the playground project.

9. Cheryl B. won split-the-pot. Mrs. H.'s room had the most parent attendees, and won the Cougar.
10. Melinda requested a motion to adjourn. Robin M. motioned to adjourn; Maureen B. seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Patty K., secretary
SGCS PTO