

**Regis Catholic Schools**  
**Education Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, January 16, 2020**  
**5:00 P.M.**  
**Regis Campus, Room 107**

Present: Fr. Sakowski, Fr. Sedlacek, Mark Gobler, Paul Pedersen, Kelly Mechelke, Carisa Smiskey, Meghan Kulig, Jackie Lutz, Linda Marx, Kayla Bahnub, Bill Spangler, Becky Alexander, Brian Hoeschen, Reid Sollberger, Andy Gorniak (recorder)

Absent: Fr. Kurzynski, Fr. Oudenhoven, Fr. Krieg, Fr. Tadathil, Eric Nelson, Sandy Makuck

- I. Meeting called to order – Reid Sollberger 5:05 P.M.  
Opening Prayer, Fr. Sakowski  
Minutes from December were approved by Linda Schultz and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Becky Alexander
- II. Standing Committee  
No report for School Life or Teaching and Learning. Please see the Catholic Identity Commission report for November 5, 2019, and January 14, 2020, meetings that Linda Schultz sent via email.
- III. Central Office Reports  
Communications - Meghan Kulig executed the following report. She started out by thanking all of the committee members for all their hard work and tenacity during their everyday duties and responsibilities. Meghan Kulig, by way of approval from school administration and the finance council, invested in yard signs for both Catholic Schools Week and the enrollment season. The yard signs are free and will subsequently be handed out during the Tony Olson Gym Dedication after Mass on Sunday, January 26, 2020. Preschool and Kindergarten postcards advertising open houses/orientations were passed around the room for the commission to review. A strong emphasis for more digital advertising is being pursued to strengthen outreach and marketing strategies. The 2020-21 tuition rates were accepted by the Bishop as Mark Gobler confirmed, and a copy of the tuition rate increase letter was sent to current families within our RCS system. A hard copy of this letter was also passed around the room for the commission to review. Mark Gobler assured the committee there is tuition assistance available to families and he feels we can cover additional increases if families utilize these programs. Meghan Kulig discussed her rough development of a post-graduate (five-years graduated from RHS) high school survey template, and passed a LifeTrack High School survey template around the room for the commission to review with intent to gain approval. Meghan Kulig sought out committee feedback on new questions (i.e., faith-related and discussion-related) that we would want implemented in the survey. Linda Marx had suggested the following questions: “How devote are you as a practicing Catholic?” Also, Fr. Sakowski added, “How well did RHS help you grow in your faith/how active are you in your faith?” Regarding survey progressions, Meghan Kulig will update Education Commission during the next meeting.  
  
Enrollment, Introduction of - Andy Gorniak introduced himself as the new Enrollment and Tuition Coordinator at RCS. Mark Gobler advised commission members (Linda Marx, Becky Alexander, Linda Schultz, Brian Hoeschen, and Bill Spangler) to likewise introduce themselves.

Office Supervisor - Kelly Mechelke reported that Rachel Brogelman resigned as Office Manager at the Central Office, effective Friday, January 17, 2020. She added that restructuring the administrative positions at the CO is of utmost priority, including hiring a part-time office aide to assume Scrip and greeter duties and responsibilities. Mark and Fr. Sakowski reinforced organizational chart reviews and structural changes are long-range goals. Kelly Mechelke was happy about the people in place at the CO as well as its established culture.

#### IV. Old Business

Ad Hoc/Management Committee Progress – Fr. Sakowski specified that the Controller’s office, including duties and responsibilities, competitive teacher pay and retention, and long-range financial planning are the Ad Hoc Committee’s main strategic goals up to this present time. Kelly Mechelke and Mark Gobler had collaboratively added that outsourcing payroll is a current topic of discussion to improve controller efficiencies at CO. A business plan is in its early stages of being finalized before a proposal is submitted. Management Committee is reviewing organizational charts, structural changes, and is in a provisional planning phase.

President Search - Kelly Mechelke exited the room because she is a candidate. Becky Alexander stated that the position is posted and open until 1/31. Becky Alexander specified the President Search Committee (Fr. Sakowski, Fr. Kurzynski, Fr. Krieg, Becky Alexander, Tina Bourget, Paul Pedersen, Jen Eager, Eric Nelson, Fr. Sedlacek, Jackie Lutz, Shaunessey Murphy, Doug McCauley, Nan Falbo, and Mike Buck) has met once thus far to discuss search and screening processes. Applications submitted are re-routed to committee members for review/feedback. Questions have yet to be determined for the interview process. Interviews will begin early-to-mid February (after Catholic Schools Week). Becky Alexander focused attention on the President’s core competencies (mission-driven decision-making, strategic thinking, leadership, responsible management, and flexibility). No further questions were presented to the commission regarding updates.

Parent Safety Meeting - Mark Gobler emphasized parent(s)/guardian(s) attendance was met to a higher than anticipated degree. School Safety and Mental Health were both the topics presented at the forum. The safety measures and steps RCS has taken to ensure the safety of students and staff were discussed in liaison with two officers from the Eau Claire Police Department. John Cook talked about technological advancements/improvements (e.g., security cameras) to curb threats. Meghan Kulig is sending a letter follow-up to parents in attendance expressing gratitude and a gentle reminder to adhere to RCS’s collective focus on higher student achievement and better instruction. Carisa Smiskey praised the multifarious concerns and questions that were brought to everyone’s attention. Jackie Lutz highlighted her observation of fears being calmed and more effective ways presented to handle unpredictable, real-world situations. Paul Pederson said people were asking the right questions, concerns, and being straightforward and honest. Parents were looking for bulletproof assurance that their kids were going to be safe while attending RCS, but Paul Pedersen replied practically by ensuring them that ECPD’s response time is approximately 90-seconds (recorded from a previous police incident) and RCS preparation is second to none with regards to following the Department of Justice statewide standards to improve school safety. Mark Gobler also added that spirituality is an essential piece to address mental health. Linda Schultz asserted it’s a parent’s ultimate responsibility to educate/mentor children—not schools as they can only do so much.

#### V. New Business

2020-21 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Enrollment Incentive - Mark Gobler indicated that he, Meghan Kulig and Andy Gorniak are going to collaborate on developing a 4<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment incentive. Andy Gorniak had

asked a question regarding enrollment trends. The main factor impacting its decline in enrollment numbers stems from the most recent recession.

Tentative School Calendar 2020-21 - Andy Gorniak passed the tentative 2020-21 School Calendar around the room for the commission to review. Mark Gobler summarized important dates and reminders, as well as emphasized that the calendar is to be kept confidential until it is proposed for final review.

Hispanic Outreach - Kayla Bahnub reported that Tammy Olivas, the Outreach Director of Hispanics for School Choice, a nonprofit that aims to support Hispanic families through educational opportunities statewide, conducted the Faith Family Formation at Immaculate Conception Elementary School on January 8, 2020. Andy Gorniak and Anita Wahl were also in attendance. Attendance at the forum were adequate. Several families were interested in enrolling. Tammy Olivas will be present to speak at the Sunday, January 26, 2020 Mass at IC; and, tours will be led by Kayla Bahnub following Mass. Fr. Sakowski had added that culture barriers are present amongst Hispanic families and we must, on the whole, break them down as ambassadors of RCS. Kayla Bahnub informed that a translator sends out communication emails to Spanish communities on Fridays at IC. Kayla Bahnub and Anita Wahl are planning to meet on January 17, 2020 to discuss scheduling a potential day in February for Tammy Olivas to hold an enrollment event.

2020-21 Tuition Rates — Mark Gobler detailed the motion amendment was approved by Finance Council. Concerns about tuition affordability were overcome by tuition assistance programs, such as parental choice, St. Benedict, St. Mary Endowment, Two Eagles, etc. Tuition increases will be far less significant for the 2021-22 school year.

Potential Conflict with next Scheduled Meeting (3/19/20) - Mark Gobler provided athletics as a contingency to a potential conflict with the next scheduled meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March, 2020.

- VI. School Reports  
Principals were reminded to meet student attendance required at all Mass. Catholic Schools Week was further highlighted as an important reminder.
- VII. Closing Prayer - Fr. Sedlacek
- VIII. Moved to closed session at 6:15 P.M.

Andy Gorniak (recorder)