

Regis Catholic Schools
Education Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 16, 2020
5:00 pm
Virtual WebEx Meeting

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

Absent: Bill Spangler

- I. Call Meeting to Order (Reid Sollberger, 5:02 pm)
 - a. Opening Prayer (Fr. Sedlacek, 5:02 pm)
 - b. Approval of May Minutes (Reid Sollberger, 5:03 pm)
 1. Jackie Lutz was present at last meeting, minutes will be updated to reflect.
 2. Linda Marx made motion to approve. Becky Alexander second the motion. All in favor to pass.

- II. Standing Committees

No meetings have met since last Commission meeting. On behalf of the Catholic Identity Committee, Becky Alexander thanked Fr. Sedlacek his work at Regis.

- III. Election of Officers 2020-21 Academic Year (Reid Sollberger)
 - a. Nominations of Chair, Vote

Reid Sollberger asked for nominations for the next Chairperson. Linda Marx nominated Bill Spangler. Linda Marx and Reid Sollberger spoke to Bill Spangler about the position and Bill said he would accept if nominated. No other nominations were suggested. All were in favor of being Bill being Chairperson next year. No one opposed. Fr. Sakowski thanked Reid Sollberger for his service to the Education Commission.
 - b. Nominations of Vice Chair, Vote

Becky Alexander explained that her role as Vice Chair was to lead meetings when Chairperson was absent. Reid Sollberger asked for nominations. Kelly Mechelke said Linda Schultz expressed interest. No other nominations were suggested. All were in favor of Linda Schultz serving as Vice Chair next year. No one opposed. Reid thanked Becky Alexander for her service.

- IV. By-Law Changes (sent by Kelly Mechelke)
 - a. Article IV 3b, Consensus for approval

Kelly Mechelke reported that the article is correct as written in copy that was sent electronically. It reads “Pastors from the supporting parishes being represented by individuals (layperson or priests)”.

 - b. Article VIII 2, Consensus for approval

Kelly Mechelke reported that the article is correct as written in the copy that was sent electronically. All were in favor of approving the wording as it reads. No one opposed. Wording approved.

Kelly Mechelke said that Linda Schultz alerted her to the fact that not all By-Laws are numbered correctly according to the Diocesan Handbook. Kelly Mechelke and Linda Schultz made a few minimal changes to the numbering.

Additionally, Article XI (Operating Procedures) was omitted from the previous By-Laws. Kelly asked if it should be on our By-Laws since it is on the Diocesan one. No one knew why this article was omitted on current By-Laws. Mark Gobler said this should be brought to Commission at the August meeting for a vote. Kelly Mechelke will make sure this is brought up at August meeting.

V. Central Office Reports

a. Communications (Meghan Kulig)

Meghan Kulig presented the Communications Report. She has been meeting with principals regarding COVID on a weekly basis. Her goal is send updates to families on a weekly basis to keep everyone informed. Design work is underway for the next Rambler Report, which will be sent out around July 4th. Summer social media plans are in place and scheduled to help keep people engaged over the summer.

b. Enrollment (Andy Gorniak)

The current enrollment count for K-12 is 716 students. Out of the 190 Choice students, 155 are enrolled. 61 families have not re-enrolled. There are 42 new families enrolled in K-12. There are 36 new Choice students. The number of Choice students is higher than it was last fall, which is good. The total system-wide enrollment, including pre-school, is 762. There are a number of transfer requests that are being processed.

Fr. Sakowski shared that an email from Tom Reichenbacher had gone out to some administrators with a letter from the Bishop regarding his support of in-person school taking place in fall. Meghan Kulig will send Bishop's letter to all staff and families tomorrow.

Andy Gorniak said that he received a lot of positive feedback on the survey that was sent out to parents. Meghan Kulig reported that the surveys had very good response. The parent survey had 395 responses. A majority of parents wanted their children back in school. 93% said they would feel comfortable sending their children back to school in fall. If masks were required, responses were split. If school does not resume in fall, some parents shared that they would not be re-enrolling their children.

Mark Gobler said that the Administrators are invited to a meeting with the Diocese on Thursday to discuss re-opening schools in fall. He also said that Kelly Mechelke will be attending a meeting on June 30 with the Eau Claire Area School

District to discuss re-opening. Kelly and Mark will be looking at information from School Choice Wisconsin. They will share any significant information. Meghan Kulig said that the DPI is planning on releasing their guidelines on June 22.

Fr. Kurzynski asked that if there is a difference happen if there is a difference between the Bishop's stance and County guidelines, what will be communicated to families? Fr. Kurzynski also asked if we have a pathway for families who may feel forced into sending their children to school if the County still has restrictions? Mark Gobler replied that the Administrative team will collaborate with local government. It is a complicated situation for the Diocese because every county has their own set of rules. Kelly might have to work with our Diocesan attorney to make sure we are compliant.

Kelly Mechelke said that there are good plans in place for all of our schools. and Weekly meetings are taking place with the principals and a lot of brainstorming is taking place to make sure all schools are ready. John Cook is getting a few things set up so that every teacher has access to record themselves for instruction in case it is needed.

Brian Hoeschen asked what the plan is for Student Transit and busing in fall. Kelly Mechelke said she has been in contact with Student Transit. They anticipate students might have to wear masks on the bus. Buses will most likely need to be cleaned in between stops. Student Transit is still working out the details on how everything will happen. Kelly will get another update from Student Transit on July 1.

VI. Old Business

a. Meeting Dates 2020-21 (Kelly Mechelke)

Kelly Mechelke said that are two sets of proposed meeting dates for 2020-2021. One set was created by Mark Gobler and the other was created by Linda Schultz. The main difference is that on Linda's proposal, the January date is more of an update rather than a full meeting. Reid Sollberger said that if it was necessary, a January meeting could be called if it was required. More were in favor of Linda's proposal of not holding a full January meeting unless it is necessary.

Brian Hoeschen asked if it would be possible to continue to meet remotely for people who might not be able to attend in person. Kelly Mechelke said that is a good option that could most likely be facilitated.

b. Staffing 2020-2021 (Principals)

Paul Pedersen gave update on Middle and High School. The German teacher left and is going to graduate school. A former Regis teacher will be coming back to teach German next year. Jill Klotz, the Middle School English teacher, is leaving. A teacher from one of our elementary schools expressed interest and will teach Middle School English next year. A current focus is hiring for the Campus

Minister (.5 position), 9th grade religion (.5 position), and 6th grade religion (.5 position). Candidates are being interviewed this week and next week. It is not clear on how these positions will fit together.

Jackie Lutz gave update on St. James. A 1st grade teacher has been hired. The cook's position has been filled. The openings for paraprofessionals will be figured out later this summer.

Kayla Bahhub gave update on Immaculate Conception. A number of interviews for 2nd grade and 5th grade teaching positions were held. Kayla is working on getting commitments and will continue to interview until those positions are filled. A school counselor was hired.

Carissa Smiskey gave update on St. Mary's. A new administrative assistant has been hired. A .5 position has been posted for 4 year old teacher. That posting closes on June 26. Carissa explained the Altoona School District has dissolved their community partnership for the 4K programs.

c. 5th Grade Promotions (K-5 Principals)

Carissa Smiskey said that the St. Mary's 5th Grade Promotion was held virtually. It was recorded and shared with families. K-5 teachers attended. Carissa and Emily Bursette drove to homes of 5th graders to deliver Regis swag and certificates.

Jacki Lutz said that St. James recorded their 5th Grade Promotion and shared virtually with their families. Jackie and Amanda Bell drove certificates and scholarships to the homes of students.

Kayla Bahhub said that IC also held their ceremony virtually. Everything went well and she complimented John Cook on his efforts.

Reid Sollberger commented that John Cook should be thanked for all of his work on the various events over the past several months.

d. MS/HS Promotion, Virtual Awards, Graduation (Paul Pedersen)

Paul Pedersen gave an update. The Virtual Awards Day and Middle School Promotion were recorded and are available to families. Feedback from families was positive. Baccalaureate Mass was held in the Regis Chapel. It was livestreamed and seniors and their families were invited to come to the back parking lot to watch live on their devices. Families appreciated these efforts. Fr. Sakowski and Fr. Sedlacek gave blessings to each car as they drove out of the parking lot. Graduation was held in the Regis Auditorium. Each family had a 10 minute time slot to come. Pomp and Circumstance was played for each graduate as they walked the stage. Sharp Photo took pictures of each student.

Valedictorians and Salutatorians gave their speeches, which were recorded. John Syder gave the introductions and welcomed each family. Seniors took their

senior surveys in the Computer Lab. Staff members were positioned at various places in building to help direct families. Fr. Sedlacek gave a final blessing to each family as they left the building. Most families were very happy with how graduation was held.

Mark Gobler gave compliments to all of the principals on the wonderful job they did. He also thanked John Cook. Mark received a large number of emails expressing appreciation from families.

VII. New Business

a. Financial Report (Kelly Mechelke)

Eric Nelson was on vacation. Kelly Mechelke said things are where they would normally be right now, with a few exceptions because of COVID. The PPP loan was extended from 8 weeks to 24 weeks. Regis will be using the 24 weeks for payroll expenses, at the recommendation of the Diocese. Carissa Smiskey discussed the dissolution of the Altoona 4K partnership earlier in the meeting.

Fr. Kurzynski thanked Regis Catholic Schools for the break that was given to parishes on school subsidies in light of PPP. That break was very helpful to parishes.

b. Re-Opening of Schools (Administration)

In addition to what was discussed earlier in meeting, Paul Pedersen reiterated that planning for many scenarios is taking place on a regular basis. DPI will most likely share their recommendations and best practices next Monday. Paul thanked Kelly Mechelke for embracing this issue and hashing out various options with all of the principals.

Fr. Kurzynski asked if the CDC School Restrictions regarding co-curricular activities are still in place because some of the WIAA restrictions seem to be relaxing. Paul Pedersen said that the WIAA Board of Control and their Executive Staff are apprised of where things are at and are being very careful to not say more than is true. The WIAA is not ready to say fall sports can happen yet. They are getting prepared to help athletic directors and coaches understand how things might look. Some spring sports can take place in July for schools that chose to participate. The WIAA is in constant contact with the State Health Department, the Governor's Office, their own medical advisory board, and neighboring states.

Reid Sollberger asked that his personal email be used for any future communications that need to be sent to him.

c. Thank You, Reid, Becky and Fr. Sedlacek (Mark Gobler)

Mark Gobler thanked Becky Alexander for her eight years on the Commission. Mark also thanked Reid Sollberger for his service. Mark gave well wishes to Fr. Sedlacek and thanked him for his positive interactions with the student body.

d. President Transition (Kelly Mechelke and Mark Gobler)

Mark Gobler said that he and Kelly have had a good time working together over the past few months. Mark said Kelly will do a tremendous job and he feels she is ready to take over. Kelly said that she feels ready take over because Mark has given her many opportunities to listen and learn. Fr. Sakowski thanked Mark for his seven years of excellent service.

e. Acknowledgement of Retirees (Kelly Mechelke and Mark Gobler)

Mark Gobler shared that the following staff are retiring: Donna Simon, aide at Immaculate Conception, after 22 years; Kathy Long, assistant at Middle and High School; Bill Uelman, Advancement Director after 43 years.

Reid Sollberger asked how the interviews for the new Advancement Director were going. Kelly Mechleke said that the final interviews were held yesterday and an offer will be placed tomorrow. An update will be available at the next meeting.

VIII. School Reports (No Reports)

IX. Closing Prayer (Fr. Sedlacek)

X. Adjourn (Reid Sollberger, 6:18 pm)