

February 11, 2015

St. Charles Catholic School Parent Advisory Committee Meeting

Start 6:33 P.M.

Prayer

Adoption of Agenda: Moved by Jodie Gale, seconded by Heather Smart.

Adoption of Minutes from November 12, 2014: Adopted Denise George, seconded by Jodie Gale. No corrections, additions, omissions required.

This meeting is being held in the small gym to accommodate the expected number of parents anticipated to attend.

Business Arising from the Minutes

The following board members are in attendance of this meeting to address issues arising from letters being sent home to SCCS and AKD families.

Msgr. Comeault – Corporate Board Chair Representative

Robyn Powell – Board Chair – Alumni Representative

Denise George – Vice Chair - Parish Representative - St. Paul the Apostle

Randy Thompson – Parish Representative - Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Geoff Macdonell – Parish Representative - St. John XXIII

Dave Wyllie – Buildings and Grounds

Janine Turnbull – Recording Secretary

Stacey Kulbacki – PAC Chair

Lisa Webster – Parent Representative(2015)

Janice Compton – Parent Representative(2016)

Brian Quick – Parent Representative(2016)

Dr. Anne Penny - Principal - Ex- Officio

REPORTS

Report from Dr. Penny

It is Catholic Schools Week. Unfortunately all outdoor activities scheduled for Thursday, February 12th will be canceled due to the cold weather warnings. Students will now be having a color day, with various fun activities being planned. Grades K - 2 will be participating in 100 Day activities. Grades 3 - 5 will have a dance, watch a movie and maybe do some fun extra reading. Grade 6 will have popcorn and watch a movie.

The two open houses went extremely well. The school is currently interviewing new students. Re-registrations went out this week. Due date is Monday, February 23rd.

Last week Dr. Penny visited a school in Argyle, Manitoba. The school has implemented an integrated learning program for their students based on a balanced learning schedule and activity based learning. It has been quite successful for students, especially those with ADHD. For example, when the students arrive at school, they go for a 40 minute walk. On Thursdays, they do not attend "regular" classes, half the students go curling and the other half do another activity.

Lent starts the week of February 16th. On Tuesday morning, February 17th, it is the Shrove Pancake breakfast. All families are also welcome to attend the Ash Wednesday mass at 10:30 on February 18th. The grade six class will be administering the ashes.

The school has two academic goals this year. In math, we would like at least 80% of the students knowing their math facts. All are currently on target. The other goal is to have at least 85% of students achieving at least 90% in excellence in writing. The third non-academic goal is to have an increase in joyfulness for all families. A survey will be going out to see if we are on track!

Fabio De Luca has donated a new coffee pot and fresh De Luca coffee to the school.

Chair report

School board report

The school board met last Thursday. These items will be discussed tonight.

Fundraising report

Janice Compton discussed the Steep Tea fundraising event. The plant sale pickup will be the Thursday after the May long weekend (Thursday, May 21st).

Michele Ashe inquired on when donations are recorded in the office. A few gift basket donations have not been recorded. Laura Salamacha has a list of those who donated to the Family Bingo event. She will forward all info to gift basket coordinator Tamara Stewart and they will work with Janice Compton to determine the hours to be credited to the families. Janice just needs to get number of hours allocated approved by the Board.

Review of community events

There have been none since our last meeting.

Upcoming community events

March 26th is the spring staff appreciation event hosted by the grade six class. Stacey will send out a reminder email to the class reps.

The grade 7 & 8 reps would like to start planning the grad details/events.

Class rep reports

Nothing to report

New Business

Please note the following PAC rules:

Respectful Meeting Guidelines

1. Respect each other.
2. All members should be treated as equals.
3. Confidentiality must be maintained.
4. Discuss issues not people.
5. Listen respectfully.
6. Focus on the issues.
7. Refrain from personal attacks.
8. Refrain from dominating the discussions.

Standing Rules of Procedure for Parent Advisory Committee Meetings

1. The SCCS Parent Advisory Committee is a non-decision making advisory committee that governs by consensus and refers matters on to the Governing Board of Directors of St. Charles Catholic School.
2. Speakers must address all remarks through the Chair.
3. All members are requested to identify themselves by name before speaking and to speak at the microphone if available.
4. Members may speak only once on any given topic and are limited to 3 minutes, unless permission to the contrary is given by the assembly. A speaker's order list will be maintained by the Chair.
5. For purposes of clarity, motions may be requested to be submitted in writing at the discretion of the Chair.
6. Roberts Rules of Order will govern.

Discussion on TRACK program

T – Teamwork

R – Respect and Responsibility

A – Age Appropriate Behaviour

C – Christian Attitude

K – Kindness

What is TRACK? It is a way to monitor student behavior and a communication tool between parents, the administration, and the students. It is a tool to help recognize where, when, and how certain behaviors are occurring. The school wants the students to be successful and recognize that parents do not want to see their child “written up” in the TRACK book. Tammy Narynski deals with all TRACK related behavior and any resulting issues. TRACK records start fresh every year. Any behavioral incident is not written up until after many verbal warnings and discussions have occurred. Mrs. Narynski only steps in when the discussed behavior continues.

The common theme for the parents concerns about the TRACK system is the communication process. New families to the school seem to be confused on what TRACK is and how it works. TRACK is mentioned in the agenda but more details should be put forward, possibly giving examples of unacceptable behavior and the resulting consequences. It was suggested that TRACK details should be discussed at the spring meeting with the parents for each grade level.

If a student is written up in the TRACK book, how are the parents notified? There does not seem to be a clear communication process to the parents. The parents should be contacted directly about their child’s behavior issues, they should not hear about it from other individuals.

Staff is to let the homeroom teacher know of any concerning behaviors that happen outside of the classroom. It is the responsibility of the home room teacher to contact the parents, if they feel it necessary.

A few parents expressed concerns about this blanket policy. Do the younger ones grasp the TRACK concept? Is their behavior being explained to them in an age appropriate manner? Do they actually understand what they have done “wrong”?

The Board does not address or respond to anonymous emails and/or letters. Any emails or letters sent to the school/Board need to be signed. The administration and Board is not closed minded or punitive and are open to change, recommendations, and/or suggestions.

TRACK updates should be communicated in either the agendas or the weekly email updates. Since the Kinders do not receive an agenda, communications should be delivered to these families in either the information packages sent out at the beginning of the year or a specific email detailing TRACK policies and procedures.

A discipline policy will exist and in place regardless of what its title. TRACK is just an acronym.

If a parent is uncomfortable talking to their child's teacher, they are welcome to go see Mrs. Narynski directly. The school staff and administration are professionals. Board members also sign confidentiality agreements concerning all school matters.

Babysitters Course

This course has been offered in the past in the evenings. The issue at the moment is the school does not have a qualified individual to teach the course. If anyone knows someone that would be interested, please contact the school office. Jodie Gale mentioned St. Francis Xavier CC is offering the instructors course on May 9th. The instructor's course is also available through St. John's Ambulance. The school can advertise for an instructor in the weekly update.

Parking Concerns

The school has received a few concerns about parking issues. Please remember not to park in front of the school when dropping off students. This is a no stopping zone. The buses do get annoyed as they are blocked from passing, especially when there is also another car parked on the opposite side of the street. Also, please remember not to park or stop in the bus loop.

A few parents also mentioned concerns about the buses driving quite fast when parents and students are at the cross walk. Parents should copy down the bus number and call 311 to make a complaint directly to the bus commissioner. The transit office would prefer to hear directly from the parent who witnessed the specific traffic infraction, as opposed to receiving the complaint from the school or the Board. They want specific information and not generalities.

Roof Issues with the 1913 Building

The Board is here to discuss the letters sent out by STCCS and AKD.

A building assessment was done on the school by Stantec Architecture. They provided the Board with a 90-page document listing all the absolute, must do repairs, including both the 1913 building and the 1964 addition.

One of the concerns in the report is that any repairs or renovations in either building will affect the Academy Kids Daycare situated in the 1913 building on the second floor. The major issue is the space is non-conforming to daycare zoning codes and by-laws. The daycare itself currently falls under a grandfather clause allowing it to operate in its current space even though it is non-conforming to today's daycare standards and safety codes. When any renovations are done to any part of the buildings, it can trigger a review of the grandfather clauses which may require the daycare to cease operations in our buildings. The Board has consulted 2 different architecture firms and they are unable to quantify what types of renovations would result in

this happening. Upgrades to the AKD space could exceed \$1 million and these renovations may still be insufficient for zoning by-laws. Specific issues noted are the three flights of stairs and only one exit. Maintaining the daycare in its current space is not feasible for the long term. This is difficult as AKD has been in the school for the past 30 years.

In June, Robyn Powell attended the AKD AGM. At that time, she informed the AKD Board of Directors of the schools building and roofing issues. They were not surprised about the renovation requirements and recognized the renovations may have an issue on their space and their license. At that point it appeared to be a several year relocation issue for them.

After completion of the roof replacement, the boiler is still in need of replacement, but the electrical and heating pipes need to be upgraded first, before work is actually done on the boiler.

The problem became critical last fall when water leaks appeared in several places in the 1913 building. A roofing company came in and did some additional patching work but advised that the roof was now beyond any further patches and was in imminent need of replacement. It was advised that potentially it could become problematic if we had a heavy snowfall this winter resulting in further damages to the roof and building in the spring thaw. The Board put their heads down to discuss possible solutions.

The school signed a contract with the architectural firm 2Architecture Inc. on January 8, 2015. Immediately following that meeting, members of the Board and Buildings and Grounds Committee met with AKD at 2:45 pm. Environmental testing on the roof is not yet complete. The roofing repairs will be a major impact on both SCCS and AKD. Areas affected could be AKD, the music room, the Kinder area, Ms. Lalonde's class in the basement, and the downstairs BASC area.

It has become evident over the last few days that the planned phase one roof replacement being completed over spring break is no longer an accurate timeline.

What was communicated at the January 8th meeting with AKD and what the Board thought was communicated and what AKD heard no longer appears to be the same message. Never once was AKD asked to leave their space. The Board's intent at the time of the meeting was to advise AKD of the potential upheaval the roof replacement could have on the day to day operations of their daycare, and to consider their options should a worst case scenario occur. The Board wanted to be upfront and transparent with AKD.

AKD is looking at a possible relocation space at Bridge Church by The Oaks. However, this space would only allow them a total of 25 children as day care zoning by-laws stipulate a certain amount of square footage/child and a certain amount of square footage/sunlight/child.

The Board looked at the possibility of getting portable classrooms as additional spacing solutions. However, it would cost over \$10,000 to put the portable classrooms in the school yard and an additional \$3,000 - \$4,000 per month in rent.

SCCS Board would like to establish further communication with AKD. We are currently discussing possible mutually agreed on times for a future meeting. One issue is that Msgr. Comeault is coming into the Lenten season and his availability will be limited.

The SCCS Board does not have any control over daycare codes and zoning regulations. Day care codes are highly regulated and their operations must adhere to provincial regulations. Two specific examples are the requirement to have two exits and a locked entry into the day care requiring parents to be buzzed into the building.

Questions from parents: The letters distributed to the families are written with very different tones. Why do the repairs need to be completed over spring break? Why can the work not begin in June?

Answer: This is an enormous project. In January, the Board was hopeful that a part of the phase one repairs would be complete over spring break making the roof water tight. This is no longer feasible. The flat part of the roof area is the biggest concern. Ideally, these repairs need to be completed prior to the spring thaw. The SCCS Board never indicated AKD needed to vacate the premises. The SCCS Board understands AKD is just trying to give their families notification of a possible relocation.

Question: How could the phase one repairs be completed in one week? It is one thing to be told AKD will be shut down for one week and another to be told AKD needed to vacate the premises. If these issues were known in January, why not schedule the repairs for June. AKD families now have only 6 weeks to find alternate childcare. It will be difficult to find alternate solutions almost at end of school year. Summer daycare and/or camps are easier to schedule.

Answer: The goal is to get the project done, at least phase one, before the snow melts. The Board is also trying to avoid having to spend additional funds to repair water damage caused over the spring thaw. Additionally, it is very difficult to get a contractor during the busy summer season. The Board had a plan, hire a roofer, then they were told that an architect was needed to draw up plans to replace the roof. Then a process of vetting and hiring an Architecture firm needed to be done. Approval from the Archdiocese was needed. Once the Architects were hired, it was determined that no work could be started until an environmental assessment was completed. Once the environmental reports are available, a roofing company needs to be hired and additional meetings scheduled, etc, etc. As of yet a contractor has not been hired. A request for a proposal has been sent out.

The letter sent to parents from AKD was not expected and the SCCS Board was quite surprised by its tone and content. Unfortunately, the repairs and renovations need to be done; it can no longer be avoided. These repairs and renovations do not only affect AKD, but SCCS as well!

Question: Will the school still be able to use the playground? AKD is also a feeder of children to the school. Will this affect enrollment?

Answer: Unfortunately, at some point, the AKD will need to relocate. The number of children who enroll at SCCS from AKD varies from year to year. But the vast majority of students who enroll at St. Charles are from word of mouth referrals from our current families.

Initially, the Board asked Stantec to draw up plans for a stand-alone building and relocate AKD into a section of the school yard. This would cost over \$4 million and take up large chunk of the school's playground. Another possible solution that was discussed was tearing down the 1913 building and rebuilding. Again zoning codes are an issue as only a two floor building could be built. AKD would occupy one floor alone. This does not solve our school's spacing issues. The Board also looked at relocating SCCS. The school and its property is owned by the Archdiocese, therefore, SCCS cannot simply leave and abandon its current location. The cost to completely tear down the school and rebuild would start at a cost of approximately \$8.5 million, for just a plain box and not much more. The Board's number one responsibility is to the students, parents, and the Archdiocese. Its mandate is to keep the school in repair and functioning in a viable condition. It is not part of our mandate to simply let the school building and location fall into disrepair. We must maintain the Archdiocese' valuable asset.

If the environmental testing results in the necessity for an intense remediation that could affect the rest of the school, then the affected areas would be completely sealed off. Every safety precaution will be taken. The Kinders would be moved to the main part of the building. The school does not have a forced air system, therefore, ventilation would not be an issue.

Question: Who handles the asbestos monitoring? The MMM Group (Environmental Management) is handling the environmental testing.

Answer: Any time renovations and/or repairs are done on a building of this age, it is necessary to perform initial environmental testing. Construction companies will not send in their employees before these tests are conducted and the results known.

The worst case scenario is that the school would have to shift the Kinder and music room classes. It would be a little crazy, but it is doable. Shifting AKD within the school is simply not an option as there is no space available.

Question: Why were two completely different and separate letters dispersed?

Answer: The Board is not asking for parents to choose sides. The SCCS Board was quite surprised by the letter sent to the AKD families by their Board as the initial meetings had gone very smoothly. The Board was in the process of drafting an informational letter to go out to all parents when this letter was brought to their attention.

Question: One parent commented that in all fairness to AKD, the parents were shown a copy of a letter asking specific questions of the SCCS Board regarding relocation possibilities and probabilities. AKD was relying on written and documented answers in lieu of the verbal answers received.

Answer: Unfortunately, AKD is asking the SCCS Board to answer questions, as a landlord, that the Board does not have the answers to at this time.

Question: Has a meeting with the province been requested concerning daycare regulations and grandfathered clauses?

Answer: The SCCS Board cannot request to meet with the provincial daycare regulators. The daycare in question would have to contact their provincial coordinator.

Question: AKD appears to be generalizing the school as the apparent “bad guy”. In reality, it is the provincial government’s responsibility to clarify their own regulations concerning grandfathered clauses for daycares, such as AKD.

Answer: It is rare for the SCCS Board to issue two letters within one week. While it is accepted that the first letter issued was not quite clear, the second letter explained the situation with greater clarity. The dualing letters issued (SCCS and AKD) caught the SCCS Board off guard. The SCCS Board did not see foresee the current situation and resulting issues.

Unfortunately, the future relocation of AKD is inevitable. Could the current conversations between the two Boards have happened in, for lack of a word, better way? Yes. The SCCS Board just did not believe any disgruntles would transpire. At this time, it is unclear how long AKD will remain in its current location. If the AKD were to remain in our building indefinitely, any renovations and upgrades that were needed to the 1913 building would not possible. No one wants to close a daycare. However, families come to SCCS for the benefits of the school, not because of AKD. Ultimately, it is up to AKD to find a suitable space to relocate to and plan for a seamless transition.

The roofing repair issue has always been on this PAC meeting’s agenda to discuss with parents since the issue arose. Funds for the boiler repairs and upgrades have been secured for the past three years. Unfortunately, unforeseen issues arise. For example, the need to fill in and cover of the old pool area in the lower gym was not in the B&G budget until a fire inspection flagged it and demanded it be fixed. The pool had been closed for over 25 years and it was never a safety issue until then. Now, the issue of the roofing repairs has become forefront.

The SCCS Board will do their best to keep the SCCS families in the loop and fully informed on all 1913 building repairing timelines.

It was recommended that any future fundraising events specify where the proceeds would be allocated. The funds generated from the Steeped Tea and gift card fundraisers will go towards the roofing and boiler repairs. The projected cost of the roof replacement is expected to be about \$250,000. The Board will earmark future fundraising proceeds at their next budget meeting.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled for April 8th at 6:30 in the cafeteria. Please email Stacey Kulbacki with any items to add to the agenda.

Adjournment 8:00PM