

## **SMEC Meeting Minutes**

July 29, 2020 @ 5:30pm

Via Zoom Video Conference Call due to COVID-19

**Members Present:** Fr. Brad Whistle, Stefanie Suazo, Jamie Paxton, Andrew Duperrieu, Michael Eck, Ayana McKenzie, Kelly Yazigi

**Members Not Present:** Janet Vannatter, Chris Miller

**St. Mary/Diocesan Staff Present:** Eleanor Spry, Doug Shelton, Mary Smith, Ashley Wright, Robin Mowers

Meeting opened with prayer by Fr. Brad Whistle at 5:34pm via Zoom Conference Call due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Kelly Yazigi welcomed Andrew Duperrieu as a new SMEC member.

**Approval of May 27, 2020 Minutes, June 23, 2020 Minutes, and July 2, 2020 Special Called Meeting Minutes:** A motion to approve the minutes of all three meetings was made by Jamie Paxton, 2nd by Michael Eck. The minutes of all three meetings were approved.

**Episcopal Vicar Updates**—No update.

**Superintendent Update**—No update

**Administrative Updates**—

**Director** - Despite concerns about the current Covid-19 pandemic, we are maintaining enrollment - even adding an additional 3rd grade class. We are excited to be welcoming new families but remain loyal to our current families. We do not want to overload our classes to the point that we can not social distance so some classes may soon have a waiting list. We plan to start in person instruction on August 24th per the direction of the diocese. We continue to work daily with the diocese and the health department.

Unfortunately, we did not receive all of the CARES program money that was supposed to be allocated to us by the Paducah City Schools. Eleanor fought for us but was unsuccessful. This was an unexpected hit but we know that God will provide. Eleanor explained Title I and Title IV programs and how the money is allocated and used.

Multiple avenues of health safety measures that the school is using were discussed. Some of these include: wearing masks, social distancing, temperature checks, handwashing, sanitizing of hands and surfaces, and contact tracing with seating charts. We are working closely with the health department to make the school as safe as possible when students and staff return.

Some of the CARES program money that we received allowed us to purchase devices so that we can have a 1:1 device to student ratio for grades 3-12. Students can choose to rent devices

from the school or use their own device from home. We hope to be able to purchase additional chromebooks for K-2 in the near future. A survey will go out to parents very soon to determine how many students need to rent a device. Students who choose the Distance Learning option will be able to use these at home. Families will need to purchase their own protective case.

The Lay Family Foundation applications just came in and will go out to our families for financial assistance. We are very thankful for their generosity.

**ES Principal** - The teachers are ready. The building is ready. We are meeting this week and working on logistics. We are excited about the 1:1 devices. Chromebooks are more user-friendly for elementary students.

**MS/HS Principal** - All sports dates have been moved from Aug.6 to Sept. 7. This threw us off a bit but gave us more time to breathe and recalculate. The logistical pieces are coming together. Staff will come in tomorrow to do a run-through of how things will work once students return. This will give us a chance to “poke holes” in our plan and fix problems before school begins. Students will be able to social distance without masks while seated in the classrooms. With all students having a device, every class is practically a computer lab without the sanitizing issues. This sets us up for ease of NTI as needed.

#### **Committee Reports -**

**Catholic Identity** - No Report

**Buildings and Grounds** - No Report

**Advancement/Marketing** - The enrollment numbers are up. We have almost 2 classes in each elementary grade now. It is very important for us to start school in person in August to be sure that those numbers hold. The Viking Society continues to grow and move forward. We just received a grant from the Carson- Meyer Foundation.

**Finance Committee** - No report until the Finance Committee meets.

**Technology** - With Director's written report

**Booster Club** - Written Report

**Old Business** - Kelly Yazigi nominated Stefanie Suazo for the Secretary position for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year. Stefanie accepted the nomination.

Kelly Yazigi nominated Andrew Duperrieu to be on the Endowment Committee. Andrew accepted the nomination.

SMEC agreed by consensus to accept the nominations presented.

**New Business** - The school calendar needs to be amended due to a later than scheduled start date recommended by Governor Beshear and the Diocese due to concerns about Covid-19. The new calendar amends the first day of school from August 6, 2020 to August 24, 2020 as well as the last day of school being May 21, 2021 instead of May 14, 2021. Jamie Paxton suggested that in addition to the changes above, we also cancel Fall Break which was originally scheduled for October 5-9. The SMEC board discussed the pros and cons of cancelling Fall Break for quite some time. Pros included: currently we have 165 days on our calendar and we need 170 - canceling the break will give us the 5 days we need to meet state requirements; this decision would maximize the number of days of in-person classes before the possibility of needing to transition to NTI when Covid-19/ Flu season hits; elementary childcare issues; not having a fall break discourages vacationing to hot spots and possibly bringing the virus back to the school; students will only be in school 5 weeks before we have this break; parents want kids in school. Cons included: families will lose deposits on pre-arranged plans and may be upset after losing spring break due to covid; it's a HS/MS tradition and families will go on vacation even if we have school that week, which won't prevent them from going to hotspots; Labor Day to Thanksgiving is a "long haul" for teachers and students to go without a break; parents won't understand why public schools are not losing Fall Break yet starting and ending school on the same dates; teachers may have Fall Break plans in place already; cancelling the break will affect MS/HS families more than Elementary families because it's an annual family & friends tradition for families of older kids while childcare is more of an issue for families of younger kids. After much discussion, a consensus was taken with all members present in unanimous agreement to cancel Fall Break for the 2020-2021 school year due to the reasons above.\*\*\*

**Safety** - Foggers should be here soon. Classrooms have sufficient space to accommodate social distancing. Administration, with guidance from the local health department and the diocese, is creating a system for checking temps, cleaning, sanitizing, mask wear and social distancing once school resumes.

Motion to adjourn by Jamie Paxton. 2nd by Stefanie Suazo. Meeting adjourned at 7:32pm

Respectfully submitted by Kelly Yazigi, Recording Secretary

*\*\*\*Members not present were called and informed of the discussion that took place at the meeting and a formal vote via email was done on July 31, 2020. The results of the email vote were again unanimous to cancel Fall Break for the 2020-2021 school year. While this was a tough decision, it was the choice that benefits the majority of our families.*