

SAC Minutes 1-20-10

Members Present:

Father Ed	Patty Sheinfeld
Mrs. Nydia Claudio	David Haimes
Mrs. Linda Trethewey	Kathy Elgut
Arlene Izquierdo	Stephen Zaccor
Heather Rusk	Vivian Carsello
Laura Tubio	

Mission Statement

St. Bonaventure is a Christ centered community that fosters Christ's gospel message of peace, love, service to others and fellowship.

I. Father Ed opened the meeting with a prayer especially remembering the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. Chairperson, Arlene Izquierdo, asked for a motion to pass the Nov. 2009 minutes. A motion was given and seconded and the minutes were passed.

II. New Business

-early bird middle school math program- A lengthy discussion was had regarding this topic that was continued from the prior meeting in Nov. Again, concern was expressed by members that some students may not be as well suited as others for the program as they are set on a course that ends up with very advanced math courses in the Junior and Senior years of high school and that may not be what is best for certain students. High schools are addressing this issue by considering adding other math courses that students can take at that level that would offer them alternatives. There was concern about the maturity of the students to take this on and the pressures it could bring. Many members expressed that on the other hand, a great many students are getting a lot of positives from the program and are well placed in the program. They students seem to enjoy going to the high school and they consider it a positive learning environment with teachers that are very effective. They are getting good grades and are learning. Some members expressed that students feel good about themselves and the programs adds to their self esteem. A majority of students are doing well receiving A's or B's. It was clarified that the students from Archbishop McCarthy would have their math grade included in their GPA. Students from St. Thomas would not have the grade included in the GPA and their transcript would indicate pass or fail and not the letter grade earned. The criteria for the program was also discussed. Some members thought the criteria should be more stringent than it currently is. The criteria is set out by the high schools themselves. It was considered that SBS could give parents their own criteria perhaps more in line with the criteria used by public schools for the GEM program. The administration is looking into a test for pre-algebra readiness to possibly add to the criteria. Also, parents should be given more information and about the issue of the

future math courses the students will be taking if they embark on this path. Parents who have gone through it could also be available for information and advice to new parents.

-plans for next year's math program: SBS is considering the possibility of having an in-house middle school math program with classes for Algebra and possibly Geometry. Members expressed concern about this as parents have said that they would be giving up the high school program which is tried and true for an in-house program that would be somewhat experimental. Some said if it isn't broken, don't fix it. In addition, an in-house Algebra program was done in the past and was not successful. The students would have to take a test at the end of the course to show that they mastered the material. Members said that the teacher hired should have credentials and experience with high school algebra and geometry and perhaps come from one of the high schools or GEM programs. It was also suggested that if this is done that it would be prudent to start with Algebra only at first before taking on Geometry too. Many parents would still like the option of going to the high school even if an in-house program is in place especially those that have already done 1 year of the high school program. There is an issue as to whether there would be enough students to support the bus being available to drive the students back from STA. If a group of students goes to STA for Geometry then there is an issue of having a class available to them back at SBS. There was discussion of possibly not having a certified teacher for that class and just a supervisor to allow students time to get their work done and to work together and help each other.

-registration, class size and tuition: Class size will not increase and 32 is the maximum number of students per class. Many classes do not have that many. The idea is to be able to accommodate parish families. There will be a 5% tuition hike. Mrs. Claudio will send a letter explaining and addressing class size as well. A member asked if it had been considered to try to reduce expenses rather than raise tuition in these hard economic times. It was said that expenses have been streamlined and costs continue to increase and that it was necessary to increase tuition at this time.

-pack-up bell: It seems to be working well and allows for all students to end their school day with a prayer. Car line seems to be moving more quickly at pick up.

-use of science labs and smart boards in middle school: Parents have expressed concern that not enough science experiments are being done with students in elementary and in middle school and that not all teachers are using smart boards to their full potential. This will be addressed with teachers through evaluations and training and in-service as needed.

-McGruff: This program teaches students about security and stranger danger. There is no cost to the school. If parents want to purchase security kits there is a cost associated with that. This program will be scheduled some time in the near future for the entire school.

-ITBS: Scores are in and should be going home this week. St. Bonaventure students' scores were consistently higher than those of other students in Florida and in the

Archdiocese. A sampling of parents is to be surveyed in preparation for an accreditation meeting. Students will also be surveyed. It was also mentioned that report cards should be sent home in hard copy form rather than just being available on line to send students the message of the importance of the report card. Also, ITBS scores should be sent home in sealed envelopes.

III. Other Issues or Concerns:

-There was concern among 5th grade parents that the criteria for choosing students for roles in school events such as Stations of the Cross, school plays and even honor roll and mass involvement should include consideration of the behavior and conduct record of the individual student. They felt that it sends the wrong message if students with poor conduct records are rewarded with these opportunities. Also, it was felt that students who have not been given opportunities for involvement, should be afforded those opportunities. It was also suggested that a cumulative record perhaps should be kept so that teachers know which students should be given more opportunities for the sake of fairness to all students. There was also concern about misconduct that perhaps occurs outside the classroom itself and in other areas of the school should be properly addressed and reflected in the student's record. There was concern about the subjectiveness of the discipline and that honor roll should require very good conduct. Parents are asked to refer to the parent/student handbook under Honors. It was considered that the card punch method in middle school should be extended to 5th grade. Administration will look into these issues.

IV. Closing prayer by Father Ed to conclude meeting.

These minutes are respectfully submitted by Vivian Carsello, sneetch@bellsouth.net