

St. Alphonsus Home & School
Meeting Minutes of September 16, 2009 8:15 am, Adult Faith Formation room

In Attendance: Monsignor Owens, John Steck, Jane Gironde, Deb DeAngelis, Emily Klammer, Kathy Tavolaro, Kathie Reilly, Colleen Araco, Beth Perri, Tricia Loftus, Judy Felix, Maura Zimmerman, Kellie Brogan, Sherry Mischler, Liz Fitzpatrick

Parish Report: Monsignor Owens

- Monsignor Owens welcomed everyone with a prayer.
- Our Lady of Hope School has closed, but the scholarship program is still in place to support the students going to new Catholic schools. St. Alphonsus is maintaining relationships with Our Lady of Hope.
- We have a new ceiling on the first floor of the school. Air Conditioning has been installed in the second floor computer lab. Two classrooms have new lighting.
- We have a new security system in place for the Parish Center. Last year, some graduates used the key pad code to gain access to the gym and caused damage to the gym floor. The new security will be the same security used for access to the school—electronic key fobs. The fobs record when the fob was used and whose fob was used for better security.

School Report: John Steck

- Mr. Steck thanked the Home & School for the fruit basket, and he shares that he is on the road to recovery. He reports that the school year is off to a good start.
- He and Deb met to review the 2009-2010 Home and School Calendar.
- The kick-off to the Peace Program will be held at the First Friday mass. Mr. Steck hopes to have news coverage. The Peace Garden is in place outside the school's main entrance. It will be used as part of the disciple code, a more positive approach. Mr. Steck and the teachers are introducing the Peace Program (modeled after the program Mr. Steck established at St. Hilary's School) to the students by discussing privileges and consequences. He hopes to instill a peaceful, non-violent, and non-aggressive approach to handling disputes and disagreements.
- Due to IU cutbacks, we will no longer have conflict resolution workshops for the students; however, Donna Carmean will still work with the students on Mondays handling these skills.
- Mr. Steck feels it is important for our children to witness and participate in outreach programs. We will be involved with Mercy ministries.
- An Open House for Pre-K and Kindergarten will be held on October 14, from 9am – 11am. Mr. Steck would like Home and School to participate and St. Alphonsus parents to give tours to prospective parents and students. The Open House was very successful last year. We have signs that will be reused (with the updated date) to advertise the Open House. Kathie Reilly will follow up with Liz Fitzpatrick and the parish for a list of school families and parishioners in high

- traffic areas who would be willing to post the signs in their yards. We need to make sure that the signs are within parish boundaries.
- School enrollment has increased this year to a total of 434 students. All three Kindergarten classes are filled.
 - The teachers have been given information from the Archdiocese regarding Swine Flu prevention. They are encouraging students to wash their hands and cover their mouths when coughing or sneezing. Mr. Steck has a Principals' meeting next Wednesday to review recommendations about immunizations.
 - Mr. Steck hopes to enhance the school community with more family activities.
 - Sherry asked about the policies and procedures for attending St. Alphonsus if you are not living within parish boundaries. Mr. Steck said that the prospective family would first need permission from their home parish and permission from Monsignor. At the last Open House, Monsignor and Kathy Morris were available to discuss these procedures.
 - Deb also passed around thank you notes from teachers, students, and OLH children that received scholarships.

Committee Chair Reports:

Social: Colleen Araco

- The Social Committee is scheduled to meet on Friday, September 18 to discuss new ideas and vote on which ideas to incorporate this year.
- Beth gave Colleen the volunteer list for the Social Committee.
- Plans for the Fall Family Fun Day on October 18 (2-5pm) are well underway.
- The forms for Secret Santa have been signed, approved, and submitted.
- Deb distributed the 2009-2010 Home and School Calendar. We have some new events planned for this year.
 - The Talent Show will be held during the day during Catholic Schools Week. Parents will be invited. We hope to have a performance by the hand bell choir and an 8th grade performance (since they will not be performing live at the auction this year).
 - We are planning a Game show for Catholic Schools Week with the principal and the teachers. The teachers will fill out a questionnaire before the event. A student will emcee the show, and students will participate to answer the questions. The conclusion will be a "match the baby picture to the teacher" game.
 - We hope to have a Mother-Son day at the Camden River Sharks in late April, early May. We may also be able to book the choir to sing the National Anthem.
 - Another idea is a charity night at Wendy's to benefit OLH. The teachers and Mr. Steck dress in uniform and serve the kids. This was very successful at St. Hilary's.
 - We are also hoping to plan an "Are You Smarter than a Fifth Grader?" evening event to appeal to older students. Logistics still need to be discussed.

Programs: Judy Felix & Maura Zimmerman

- The Mercy Day luncheon is next Thursday, September 24. Judy and Maura sent a flyer in today's family envelope requesting help and food donations.
- Mr. Steck called to invite Sister Madeleine to attend. Emily Klammer will give Sister a ride to Saint Alphonsus. We will present Sister with a plant at the Mass, and Mr. Steck will say a few words thanking Sister at the luncheon.
- Mr. Steck stated that even though we do not have a Mercy sister present at our school, St. Alphonsus is still very much a Mercy school and will celebrate the Mercy characteristics.

Volunteers: Beth Perri

- Beth received a great turnout of volunteers this year. She has 140 volunteers, (40 more than last year) and there are many new names.
- If you would like to send an e-mail to a specific group of volunteers, you can send the text of your e-mail to Beth, and she can easily forward it to the group.

Community Affairs: Kellie Brogan

- Beth received 4 volunteers for the Mileage Club. Two St. Alphonsus staff members are willing to help: Monica Cholaj and Barbara Waschenko.
- We will have two teams, each led by a staff member, alternating each week.
- Kellie will send a letter home to the parents explaining the Mileage Club that will be held on Fitness Fridays starting in October. The students participating in Mileage Club can wear sneakers to school on Fridays.

Publicity: Kathie Reilly

- Kathie took photographs of the students on the first day of school. She will put together posters and display them in the main foyer or in the cafeteria.
- She will update the folding sign with upcoming events and display it in car-line.
- Kathie is working with Ann Markley to promote the Auction. The current focus is bringing in donations. The Pizza Prize contest is in effect: When a family makes a donation, every child in that family gets 1 point added to the homeroom tally. The highest homeroom participation wins a pizza party.
- We talked about reinstating the Press Corps. This was a group of seventh and eighth grade students led by a parent volunteer. The students took photographs of St. Alphonsus events and submitted them to local publications.

Auction Update: Liz Fitzpatrick

- Liz reported that the committee is still looking for volunteers to handle distribution.

Ways and Means: Tricia Loftus

- Scrip
 - Mary Finley will handle the paper Scrip.
 - Tricia will work on promoting the on-line e-Scrip. Families can also hand in receipts and St. Alphonsus can receive a certain percentage.
 - We also discussed promoting Box Tops for Education in the family envelope. There is a collection box in the school office.
- Tricia has also been researching the establishment of a St. Alphonsus “Book Store” that would sell sweatshirts, t-shirts, pens, pencils etc. with the school logo. The Book Store would be open on a limited basis and could be staffed by supervised eighth graders. We talked about storing items in the Auction closet after the Auction is over. Tricia will talk to Gwynedd Mercy and other schools to find out how their Book Stores are run.

New Business:

- Mr. Steck will post school news updates in the Sunday church bulletin. It is important for the parishioners to know what is happening in our school.
- Mr. Steck proposed a Tile Art Wall project to spruce up the walls in our school and build tradition and history. Teachers, staff, families, and alumni families can design a tile for display. We can talk to Mud Shack and Color Me Mine to work with us on this project.
- Debbie is meeting with an Aramark representative next Thursday, September 24 at 1:30 pm to talk about more nutritious lunch options. She will also find out about gaining on-line access to our children’s accounts so that parents can check the account balance and print reports on what their children are purchasing.

Next meeting, **Wednesday, October 7, 8:15 am in the Adult Faith Formation room.**

***Note the date change due to the Pre-K Open House on October 14.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:45 am.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathy Tavolaro.