

## **DPA School Board Minutes**

**2023-2024**

September 14, 2023

7:00-9:00 pm

- 1) **Opening prayer** (Fr. Andrew)
- 2) **Roll Call-** (Becky)
  - a) Present-Christina Watkoski, Tonya Fritz, Dave Faber, Kate Beuschel, Fr. Andrew, Becky Porter, Bruce VanderMuelen, Kyle Pline, Jason Smith, Chelsea Lockart
  - b) Absent- Leanne Lipski, Misty Conran, Todd Kline
- 3) **Approval of previous minutes:** Approved ()
- 4) **Approval of agenda:** Approved
- 5) **Superintendent of Catholic Schools-Dave Faber**
  - a) DPA is a treasured school in the Diocese and WINGS has become a model for blended learning classrooms around the country
  - b) This October the Diocese of GR is rolling out the Strategic plan for the next 5 years, "Bridging Faith and Future, 2023-2028"
  - c) Mission - Seek and fulfill God's plan in life
  - d) Enrollment has been expanding for the 3rd year in a row throughout the Diocese
  - e) 11/8 Fall Board Summit - Spring Summit will be in May 2024
  - f) Strategic Plan will be available in paper format, magazine and video format will be shared with all the school and families.
  - g) There has been a 7.5% enrollment increase Diocese wide
  - h) At DPA there has been a 64% enrollment increase in K-8 in the past 5 years (both campuses) all while Dave had said that those have been the hardest years in his 30+ years career
  - i) St. Catherine's campus has maintained the same number of students (K-5) now as it did when the two schools merged 13 years ago
  - j) All families from DPA need to be invited into both the Parish and School to encourage mass and school participation
  - k) <https://grdiocese.org/> website for fundamental school board training, password is: board
  - l) The GR Diocese school website needs to be put on the DPA website
- 6) **Administration update:** (enrollment, staffing, other) (Kate)
  - a) 55 preschool 117 campus wide
  - b) all staffed infant through 8th grade
  - c) Need before and aftercare teachers for both campuses, there are waiting lists if they can fill more teacher positions
  - d) 16 years-old can work in infant room with a Little Wings teacher, 18+ can work in a room alone
  - e) The before and aftercare program help make money for the school and is a needed resource for the community
  
  - f) St. Catherine's campus-see above
  - g) St. Joseph campus-see above
- 7) **Action item / committee review**
  - a) **Finance:** Adding Taylor McGough (Bruce)
    - i) St. Joseph campus lost \$100,000 last year lost (projected for the 2023-2024 school year)
    - ii) St. Catherine's \$200,000 last year lost (projected for the 2023-2024 school year)

- iii) 37% verses 13% parish giving because of the grants with COVID parishes did not push giving as much as pre-covid
- iv) fundraising might need to increase to help off-set the school funding - smart fundraising
- v) School (St. Catherine's campus) can do their own fundraising that HSA could help support, such as the fish fry and then give DPA handouts and donation envelopes in take out bags

b) **Development:** Adding Kelli Ferguson (Christina)

- i) We have conditionally been awarded the Michigan State Police Nonprofit security grant for both campuses. The award is conditional and there is a hold on the award until FEMA's review and approval. They will provide more information as far as what they'll need at a later date to remove the hold. Awards will be SC - \$149,964 & SJ - \$149,950. This is to be used for fencing, updating keyless entry, portable closed network radios, improving exterior doors including making them more impact resistant.
- ii) Received MESC Grant of \$3,000 that helped pay for a new ELA program for all of our K-8 Teachers.
- iii) We are working on Increase Fundraising Efforts for SC
- iv) Meeting once a week with grant writing team to find grants for DPA needs
- v) end of life giving have a funeral company and attorney to discuss about wills and giving, estate planning

c) **Building and Grounds:** (Jason)

- i) Jason Smith had been voted in as the building and grounds committee chair
- ii) St. Catherine's has struggled with the building & grounds due to Mens Club and the friction between the two
- iii) Jason is willing to build software (interactive) that will help assist with the relationship between the two and create transparency for all parties
- iv) The software will also be able to create reports for short and long term plans for B&G
- v) Focus on optimizing warranties of things such as doors with a lifetime warranty so that there is not a need for purchasing new doors, will become a priority

d) **Strategic Planning/Policy:** ()

- i) Becky will meet with Misty Conran to figure out how to make school families aware of the strategic plan.
- ii) Finalize the plan for approval and submittal to the Diocese

e) **Mission Effectiveness:** (Kyle)

- i) Kyle continues to work on developing an updated Mission Statement for DPA
- ii) Grant Christian School earns 4xs the investment to pay for a dedicated Development person that is able to write grants for the school.

f) **Marketing:** (Christina)

- i) Spoke with a parent who works in marketing. She is considering joining the marketing team or referring one of her colleagues to join us.
- ii) Targeted Social Media Posts with Sarah Toepfer from the diocese
- iii) Bulletin Inserts in Our Cluster and nearby parishes without schools
- iv) Kate reaching out to Homeschool Co-ops in Muskegon County to come for specific subjects
- v) Church Visits
- vi) Diocese going to festivals to promote DPA
- vii) Ravenna Independent
- viii) Ask Men's club to sponsor a Fish Fry - Give out marketing materials on SC and why they should choose SC.
- ix) Car Decals - Advertising our name and fundraising effort for our school

8) **HSA/Auction updates:**

a) SJ HSA- (Leanne)

- i) samples of DPA window stickers were ordered to be made available to parents after a full order is placed. Feedback is needed before the order is placed.

- b) SC HSA- School can do their own fundraising that HSA could help support such as the fish fry and then give handouts and donation envelope (Chelsea)
  - i) tickets for auction go on sale this Sunday 9/17, after mass
  - ii) potentially selling tickets at St. Joseph and St. Francis parishes after masses as well
    - (1) Fire and Ice theme, red or blue dress encouraged.
    - (2) auction will be held: October 14th at 5:30

## 9) Open discussion:

- a) Set a meeting date to wrap up the Strategic plan edits to finalize and get the plan approved by Fr. Andrew and Kate.
  - i) Submit the final copy to Sue Haas-Williams (Strategic Planning Committee Chair) with the Diocese
  - ii) create a simplified map/overview of the strategic plan to display in the back of church and in schools to show parents and parishioners what our 5 year plan is and the steps that we are taking to get there.
- b) Marketing-logo wear website: A website with all of our spirit wear can be customized and managed by Kustom Dezins-Brenda from Allendale. An example of the page can be found at this link:
  - i) <https://capsspirit2023.itemorder.com/shop/home/> Coopersville's Spirit Wear website
- c) October 27th- 40 hours will begin with encouragement for all school families and board members to sign up for a time for adoration between 10/27 and 10/29.
- d) need to start doing a weekly parent/student spotlight for anecdotes on DPA student achievements and Catholic school successes, including data to highlight Catholic school education and to reaffirm statistics.
- e) MAPS website compared to public school testing MSTEP, standardized testing scores.
- f) There are enrollment and budget deficit concerns for St. Catherine's campus, but there are also solutions to overcome both of these issues.
  - i) We need to problem solve and keep a positive attitude.
  - ii) Highlight the fact that enrollment for Early Childhood is growing.
  - iii) Need to have more participation from families, from participating in HSA among other areas.
  - iv) Highlight and revisit why the two campuses were blended into one school.

**Next meeting is November 9, 2023 at St. Joseph campus 7:00**

**Mission:** As a Catholic academy, we cultivate courageous servants of God by nurturing strengths and promoting leadership through academic and spiritual excellence.

**Vision:** Be a learning community that grows WINGS: world knowledge, focuses on individualized, innovative education, provides a nurturing family environment, and is God-centered, while utilizing supportive technology.

### **Divine Providence Prayer**

O loving Providence of God, please guide me in my journey of life. Your love is greater than my difficulties and stronger than all my temptations. I cannot live without your grace. Though I will sin a million times, you always forgive me. You will always take care of me. For you, I will forget about myself, my thoughts, and my fears. Help me to hope in you, even in my darkest hours. Guide me through my path of life with your tender heart and protective care.

Providence did provide, Providence can provide, Providence will provide. O loving Providence of God, I commit this cause to you. Amen.