

The Basilica School of St. Mary Home and School Association (HSA) September Board Meeting

18 SEPTEMBER 2019 / 7:00 - 8:30 PM / The Basilica of Saint Mary's Lyceum, Saint Joseph Room, 313 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Attendees:

Fr. Nicholas | Daniel Cinalli, Principal | Jessica Sewall, Faculty Representative | Susan Lutz, President | Jen Dugas, Vice President | Jill Cooper, Communications Officer | Brian Persico, Treasurer | Roy Shannon, Past President | Michelle O'Leary | Christine Gunderson | Jana Adams | Ingrid Allen | Sara Burstein | Jonathan Day | Jen Discher | Lauren Eubanks | Audra Gannon | Katy Kleeman | Anne Mathis | Daniela McCool | Susan Miller | Meghan Perez-Acosta | Ann Ross | Erin Thielman | Christy Walicka

Opening Prayer

Fr. Nicholas opened the meeting with a prayer at 7:00 PM.

Welcome

HSA Board President Susan Lutz offered welcome remarks and asked each board and committee chair to introduce themselves.

Principal's Report

Mr. Cinalli gave an update on school operations and academic programs, beginning with an overview of the School's new Math in Focus curriculum, also known as Singapore Math. Mr. Cinalli encouraged all to attend a parent session on the new curriculum scheduled for Thursday, September 26 at 7:00 P.M. Mr. Cinalli also highlighted the School's Writers Workshop curriculum, the FOSS Science curriculum, and efforts to enhance blended learning in the classroom with iPads.

Mr. Cinalli reported that Scantron testing is underway and noted that Basilica School students traditionally score above the national and diocesan average. He noted that consideration is being given to expanding Scantron testing to the 8th grade with the goal of giving teachers more information on student learning.

Mr. Cinalli also mentioned that he was pleased to have Fr. Nicholas teaching 7th grade religion this year.

In reference to school operations, Mr. Cinalli stated that he is working to enhance the school's existing technology plan by incorporating a "replacement plan." He noted two specific areas of need and asked the HSA to consider 1) upgrading/replacing the current stock of iPads for the 5th grade; and 2) replacing the school's current fleet of active boards which are experiencing maintenance issues. Mr. Cinalli cited that active panels would be a better investment for the classroom over time.

Finally, Mr. Cinalli introduced Anne Mathis who has been named Director of Advancement and Special Projects for the Parish and School. Mr. Cinalli discussed her new role and read the announcement that was sent to teachers and school staff earlier this month.

Ms. Mathis noted that she was thrilled to be working directly with the parish and school after many years serving the Diocese of Arlington. Mathis discussed the Mary Lead Us Campaign and reported that, to date, \$2.5 million has been raised. She noted that every parent will be invited to participate in the campaign between now and December. In addition, Mathis highlighted efforts to launch two new initiatives - an Alumni Association and a Grandparent's Program.

Faculty Report

HSA Faculty Representative Jessica Sewall thanked the HSA for the Parent-Faculty Fall Social on September 6, 2019. She also noted that the students are excited for the School's 150th Anniversary and highlighted that each class is learning about a decade in the history of the school. President Lutz asked Miss Sewall to let the HSA know if we can help the teachers in any way throughout the year.

Treasurer's Report

HSA Treasurer Brian Persico distributed copies of the HSA Budget for the 2019-2020 academic year and reviewed the funding structure.

Persico also distributed guidelines for HSA event expenditures and reimbursements and reviewed specific policies and procedures that all committee chairs will be asked to follow.

Communications Officer Report

Communications Officer Jill Cooper discussed the new communications officer position that was created last spring with the revision of the HSA's bylaws. She noted that the goal is to communicate the work of the HSA to the parent community and welcomed committee chairs to contact her for help with their communications strategy for events. She also asked all

committee members to submit HSA announcements for The Messenger to her so she can compile everything HSA related for Mrs. Ross.

New Business

- Recap of Parent-Faculty Fall Social - Friday, September 6, 2019
Audra Gannon, Hospitality Committee Chair, reported on the HSA's the Parent-Faculty Fall Social which was the HSA's first social event of the year. Gannon noted that the event was a success with more than 150 people in attendance. The Committee spent \$1927 on food and drink which was less than the \$2,000 budgeted.
- Community Development Chair Report
Community Development Committee Chairs Michelle O'Leary and Christine Gunderson reported on several upcoming events in coordination with their event chairs.

150th Birthday Bash - Saturday, October 19, 2019

Michelle O'Leary, Christine Gunderson, and Katy Kleeman reported on the 150th School Birthday Bash which will be hosted by the HSA and is one of a series of events planned to celebrate the School's anniversary. Katy Kleeman and Andrea Amberg are the event's chairs and are working to solicit donations and gather volunteers.

Father-Daughter Dance - November 16, 2019

President Lutz reported that the HSA will sponsor a Father-Daughter Dance for the first time this year. Caroline Hollas will chair the event. Lauren Eubanks asked whether anything was planned for mothers and sons; President Lutz noted that the HSA event schedule was tight and she hopes to do a broader event next year.

Pancakes with Santa - Saturday, December 7, 2019

Jen Discher and Daniella McCool reported on plans for the annual Pancakes with Santa event hosted by the HSA. As in previous years, the event will be held in the school gym and cafeteria. Mrs. Discher asked that a new photo backdrop be created. Miss Sewall offered to speak to Mrs. Casey about making this a school art project.

Colin Casey/March Madness Basketball Weekend

Michelle O'Leary reported on plans for the annual Colin Casey basketball game for 8th grade students, parents and faculty. She also noted that this year the

event will grow into a larger community event involving a weekend 3v3 basketball tournament for all students and families.

- Fundraising Development Chair Report

Annual Fund Campaign

Jana Adams gave an update on the Annual Fund campaign which began in September. At the time of the meeting, approximately \$10,000 had been raised which Adams reported was on target with last year's campaign. All families have received emails and will receive a direct mail in the coming weeks regarding the campaign.

Christmas Tree Sales

Roy Shannon reported that the HSA's annual Christmas Tree sale will begin on December 6, 2019. Shannon predicted that sales may be down this year because many will want to put up a tree the first week of December before sales begin. The option to offer pre-orders of Christmas trees was discussed but Shannon noted that most people want to pick-out their own tree rather than place a pre-order.

Auction and Gala

Lauren Eubanks reported on plans for the annual Auction and Gala which will take place on Saturday, February 22. Eubanks noted that the theme will be Dancing with the Stars - Saints Style and the committee will be looking for individuals willing to compete in a dance competition similar to the t.v. show. Eubanks noted that the Committee is reviewing venues, especially those with audio visual capabilities to accommodate the unique theme.

Trivia Night

President Lutz noted that the HSA plans to host the first annual Trivia Night on April 25th but is still looking for someone to chair the event.

Committee Reports:

- Families in Service (FIS) Committee

Chair Mehgan Perez-Acosta reported that parents received their FIS placements on September 16 and almost all positions are filled. She noted that Committee Chairs will receive a list of names of individuals who volunteered to help with various fundraising events.

Perez-Acosta also reported on the HSA's Tervis™ water bottle fundraiser. She noted that a total of 300 Tervis™ water bottles with the school seal would become available for pre-order on Thursday, September 19 via a square link in The Messenger.

- Hospitality Committee
Chair Audra Gannon reported that the Committee's next event would be a reception following the National Junior Honor Society Induction on Friday, September 20.
- Room Parent Committee
On behalf of Chair Beth Milito, Meghan Perez-Acosta reported that all room parent positions have been filled and a room parent meeting will be held the week of September 23.
- Teacher Luncheon Committee
On behalf of Chair Becky Lily, Meghan Perez-Acosta reported that the first teacher luncheon will occur on Friday, September 27 and will be hosted by the parents of the 4th grade class.
- Community Ministry Outreach Committee
Chair Sarah Burstein discussed the new Community Ministry Outreach Committee and stated that its focus will be on: 1) serving as a liaison between the parish and the school; 2) providing resources to school families in need; and 3) planning up to three community outreach events for students throughout the year. Burstein noted that the Committee hopes to begin with a veterans project in November, followed in January by a service project for the homeless. A third project may be planned for April.

Ann Ross complimented the committee on the baskets delivered to the police and fire station on the anniversary of 9/11. Burstein noted that Father Hathaway made the request and they coordinated the effort with Mr. Cinalli and the students. Mr. Cinalli remarked that it was a great experience for all.

- Box Tops, Grocery Rewards, Amazon Smile
On behalf of Chair Alice Crouch, President Lutz reported that there is still much to be learned about the various rewards programs. She hopes the Committee will have more to report at the next meeting, including an accounting of what programs are available, how much money has been raised and where it goes. In addition, President Lutz hopes the Committee can implement strategies to encourage parent participation.

- Athletic Director

Mehgan Perez-Acosta summarized a report submitted by Athletic Director Mary Fran Delaune which highlighted that 315 students are participating in fall CYO track, cross country and tennis. It was also noted that all coordinator positions were filled, except volleyball, and that Mrs. Delaune is working to get CYO banners updated in the gym.

In relation to a question regarding spirit wear and uniforms, President Lutz announced that Christy Walicka would be working on a new effort to open a spirit store.

- Alumni Outreach

Susan Miller reported that she will be working with Anne Mathis to engage alumni for the 150th Anniversary Weekend.

Announcements and Other Business:

No other announcements or other business were discussed.

Adjournment:

President Lutz adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:30 PM.

Addendum -

Fr. Nicholas submitted the following remarks to President Lutz after the meeting: It is a “joy to be present in the school, [and] also to confirm a greater priest-presence in the school this year. Between Fr. David and myself, a priest will be visiting classrooms every day of the week (perhaps with the exception of Friday, but the kids will see the priest at the school Mass that day).”

Jana Adams resigned as HSA Fundraising Chair due to work and family commitments. Jonathan Day will work with Anne Mathis on the strategy and implementation of the Annual Fund program.

