



## ST. JAMES ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

### Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2011

Present were: Christine Denny, Kathy Dunn, Rose Garner, Angie Sacco, Jackie Nagy, Lisa Cooper, Marty Proctor, Rita Cooper, Lori Mendes, Christine Griffin, Elizabeth Goldey, Terry Grady, Robin Renshaw, Sheryl Flynn, Dana Mueller, Vivien Loef, Heather Berger, Heather Masterson, Sherry Sims, Lisa Ronco, Maria Younkers, Tammy Valley, Debra Brady, Michelle Keubitz, Nora Brady, Renee Tasted, Diane Churchyard

**Meeting was called to order by Christine Denny at 8:10**

**Opening Prayer was led by Nora Brady**

**Principal's Report was presented by Kathy Dunn**

There have been a lot of Advent/Christmas activities at school. St. Nick visited the kids and the student council is caroling each day this week. Sister Eva visited with the students. The Holy Childhood collection is still ongoing. Mission Circle is collecting epiphany boxes (which are due tomorrow) as well as gently used jackets and blankets. In addition, the food bank collection is still ongoing. Mrs. Dunn encouraged families to have their children participate in at least one of these opportunities to give to those less fortunate.

Last week there was a school-wide reconciliation service and the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade made their first reconciliation. It was a long night for many of the children; an effort will be made to try to make this service a bit shorter in the future.

The Christmas program is this Thursday night. Preparations are going well. Students are to be at school at 6:30; the church doors will open for seating at 6:45. This is the first year that the preschool students will be a part of the Christmas program. There is no flash photography or video during the program. A video will be made and the order form for this will be in the Wednesday newsletter. The costumes for the Christmas program were simplified a bit this year to minimize the work required for parent volunteers (i.e. Mary Larkin). Mrs. Dunn requested that the students remember to dress appropriately and tastefully for church.

The Kindergarten classroom received some new library furniture and magnetic white boards.

Father Ernesto is visiting 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes this year during the Spanish class, as he did last year. He gave some information to the students about Christmas traditions in Mexico.

There is no daycare this Friday, which is a half day.

The board has approved the new budget for next year. One difference next year is that there will be

a \$100.00 parent participation fee that can be offset through the purchase of Scrip gift cards (<http://www.shopwithscrip.com>; Enrollment code: E3DLLD9311LLL; code necessary to designate St. James Academy). This fee will be offset for any families who use the Scrip program and raise \$100.00 for the school. If a family does not or chooses not to participate in the Scrip program, then they can just write a check for the \$100.00 fee. This program will be for the year of January 1-December 31, 2012. This mandatory Scrip fee program is pertaining to the shop with scrip program, which are the gift certificates and prepaid cards that can be used just like cash. Every company donates a different percentage back to the school; with some companies donating more than others (i.e. See's candy donates a high percentage). The new mandatory fee cannot be offset by using the e-Scrip program, which is where you register you grocery cards and/or use the online mall. For further information on the Scrip program, go to the St. James Academy website; select the Fundraising link on the left hand side of the page, and then click on E-Scrip/Scrip.

This program is a wonderful way to minimize the work of fundraising, since people typically shop at these stores anyway. Mrs. Dunn encouraged the parent council members to pass on this information to their classes and make sure that each family understands their obligation. Our school budget must be balanced, and this cannot be done without the full participation of all St. James families in our school fundraising. Fundraising is critical to address our budget gap and St. James is looking for more efficient ways of fundraising.

Lori Mendes, who is spearheading the Scrip/E-Scrip program, encouraged people to go online to purchase Scrip, rather than purchasing from her. There are a larger number of gift cards and companies available online. She also encouraged people to look at the percentage given back by these vendors; since some give back more than others. If you do choose to order Scrip from Lori, she places orders approximately every 2 weeks and then puts the order in the oldest child's backpack. She also sends a follow-up e-mail to ensure that the parent received the package.

Mrs. Dunn wished everyone a happy holiday season and thanked everyone for all of their help.

### **President's Report was presented by Christine Denny**

#### *Grandparents Day*

This event will take place on the Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>. There will be a liturgy and a small coffee in the cry room after mass. The children can walk their grandparents up to the classroom if they would like to. The event will be scaled back from last year; and should be over by about 10:00 or so (mass, coffee, visit to classroom). Christine is looking for someone to chair this event, which should be simple. In addition, the hospitality committee will be available to help.

#### *Help Wanted*

There are a number of volunteer opportunities available:

1. Chair for Grandparents Day
2. Treasurer is needed to take over for Tammy Valley
3. Marketing Events Coordinator is needed to take over for Marie Green. Catholic schools week is coming up so this is a critical person to do this.
4. Person or group of individuals to learn Kids Art program from Lisa Cooper, who will be leaving SJA after next year.
5. Person or group of individuals to help the Gala Art Committee.

## **Ways and Means Report by Sherry Sims**

### *Kids Art*

Sherry thanked Lisa Cooper and Rita Cooper for all of their work on the Kids Art program. Lisa thanked all of the volunteers who worked with the kids on the actual art projects. The new printer, which was donated by the Knights of Columbus, has made the job much easier. The program has raised approximately \$7,000.00. Next year will be Lisa's last year at the school; she is looking for a person or group of people who have skills with Photoshop and/or are computer efficient with regards to graphics and web design.

### *Spell-a-Thon*

Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup> is the second annual school Spell-a-thon. This event was a real success last year and requires the kids to obtain pledges from neighbors and friends; and then to take a spelling test. The words will be given out ahead of time for them to study. This event is a good one since it combines the curriculum of the school with fundraising. Sherry is looking for a few volunteers to help correct papers that morning from 8:00-10:30.

### *Gala*

Last week the underwriting and sponsorships notes came out already. Two underwriters have already come in. Once we return to school in January, there will be approximately two months to get ready for this event. The second meeting will take place Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup>. Dana encouraged everyone to come and participate!

### *Gala – Class Baskets*

Sherry passed out an information form on this; it will be discussed more in January. Each pair of grade representatives is to put together a class basket which will be auctioned for the gala; this has been done for years. Typically, the baskets have a signature theme (i.e. Margaretville, Wine basket, game basket, etc...). She encouraged the PC reps to think about possible themes, although some classes already have themes in place. Christine Denny suggested a craft beer basket for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Sherry would like to make sure she knows what baskets are being done to avoid any overlap with the Kids Art program. Please let Sherry know if you have any questions on the class baskets.

Lisa Ronco asked why there was no individual art for the first grade class last year. Lisa Cooper explained that last year, individual art was not done for every grade, since in years past approximately 30% of the items were not purchased. There is a pretty small art team and the art projects are quite labor intensive. The art team has moved away from the individual art items because it shrinks down the audience of potential buyers, rather than doing one big project for a class. It is a balance of effort versus return on some of these fundraising art projects. Christine encouraged people to support the art program by purchasing your child's art at the gala and to consider it a donation to the art program.

Someone asked about the psalm book that was done a couple of years ago for the fourth grade. Christine, who spearheaded that project, reported that the return on those books was not very good considering the work and effort that went into putting them together (\$20.00 per book), so as a fundraiser she would not recommend it.

**Treasurer's Report by Tammy Valley**

The current balance is \$127,000.00. The final golf numbers were over \$13,000.00. There are a couple of golf checks still coming in.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

Maria Younkers asked if anyone at school would be interested in a first aid refresher course. Robin Renshaw had the name of a company that they have used for their Girl Scout troop. Maria will work with Mrs. Dunn to get this going.

President Christine Denny adjourned the meeting at 9:00.

Respectfully submitted,  
Monique Mayo  
Secretary