

**School Advisory Council  
Meeting Minutes  
6.6.2024**

1. Opening Prayer – Fr. Danda began the meeting with a prayer
2. Approval of minutes from prior meeting – Mrs. Kennison asked for any corrections or additions to the May 2024 minutes. Mr. Basso made a motion to approve, and it was seconded by Mrs. Nesbit. The minutes were approved by consent.
3. School update
  - a. K-8 – Enrollment is at 432 for 2024-2025 school year
  - b. Staffing – Ms. Hernandez will not be replaced for the 2024-2025 school year. The parish may also be reworking organizational structures and the school will be reconsidering reorganization of staff during the same time period. Interviews are currently taking place for a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher. There is still a need for a middle school math teacher with no clear candidate at this time. Interviewing is taking place for a pre-school teacher as Mrs. Ellis transitions into a librarian/reading role. The librarian role is now a full-time position (previous part time). Interviews are also taking place for Clover and Pre-school aids. A first grade aid has already been added.
  - c. Cheating policy – will be discussed at a future meeting.
  - d. Staff internships – A staff member completed an internship using paid time off. The internship was at another school. Mrs. Kennison asked how that should be handled. If a staff member is seeking additional education, should that person be required to use paid time off or should it be handled differently? How would this impact the retention of current teachers. Staff members currently received 2 personal days and 10 sick days. Sick days can be carried over to 90 days. Staff is allowed to use sick days for personal situations. Mrs. Nesbit noted that sick day usage was restricted to actual illness of the individual or a family member. For her school, teachers receive 3 personal days and 10 sick days. A supervisor could approve professional leave that would not be considered a personal day or a sick day. For St. Malachy, when a teacher uses a personal day, or sick day, the school incurs a cost for a substitute teacher. Mr. Basso asked if the school can recoup the cost if a person were to leave early after receiving a resignation? All catholic schools use a standardized Archdiocesan contract.
  - e. NSBECS – Mrs. Kennison would like to create a sub-committee to further consider this summer.

- f. A report incident is now provided under the quick link tab to report incidents of bullying or other matters that need the attention of the school. Asks for the type of incident and whether the reporting person wants to be anonymous.
4. Service Hours Requirement for the 2025-2026 school year. Any such changes will be for the 2025-2026 school year.
  - a. Should the deposit be raised? The general consensus is that the dollar amount of the deposit should be increased.
  - b. There is a PTO service list that will assist families to fulfill service hours.
  - c. The school is working on a QR code so that families can easily code to log service hours in a real-time format.
5. Discipline Board/Process - Mr. Zarich reviewed the rough draft and components. Mr. Zarich informed that the draft was developed through utilizing reference to St. Thomas' discipline policy supplemented with reference to St. Jude's bullying policy. The Discipline Subgroup determined that St. Thomas and St. Jude offered the best discipline framework to develop the St. Malachy draft policy. Discipline policies from Christ the King, St. Pius, Immaculate Heart of Mary, and St. Lukes were also considered.

Mr. Zarich discussed the framework for the discipline draft. It included standard/classroom misconduct and serious misconduct as the two discipline categories. Standard misconduct would be dealt with by the classroom teacher without formal notification to parents. Teachers would be able to develop classroom rules approved by the administrator. More serious misconduct would be subject to a formal, documented progressive discipline policy. This would also at times require the application of a fair process, whereby the student and student's family would meet with the administrator to be presented with facts and present their side of the story. It was discussed whether the Pastor should be a part of this fair process or be available to appeal the decision after the meeting. Consensus was that the Pastor should be part of the Fair Process and not an appeal. This will ensure the Pastor is involved with the decision but does not undermine the decision of the principal.

It is also a process that Ms. McFarland and Mrs. Kennison should not meet with parents without other teachers and administrators. We need a plan that has specific roles and responsibilities for each staff to ensure a fair process for all discipline issues. Fr. Danda said a significant issue is students telling teachers and parents different things.

Fr. Danda expressed a concern that with Ms. Hernandez not being present for 2024-2025, it is important that the Dean of students has the resources necessary to implement the new discipline policy.

The discipline policy must be reviewed by teachers and the Dean of students. The forms need to be standardized so that each teacher is consistent with enforcing the new policy. The disciplinary subgroup should check with other schools for standardized incident forms. The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has an incident report form. We need to clarify when parents should be contacted for repeat minor discipline behaviors. Clarify what information is to be part of the student record. Parents had concerns about infractions because it seemed kids were about to be excluded when they shouldn't have been because of the number of infractions not the severity of behaviors.

Next steps – Mrs. Kennison will review discipline policy and then meet with Discipline Subgroup to discuss edits.

Fr. Danda noted it would be good to have a pool of teachers review. The infraction forms have become classroom management under the current system instead of using other means to manage the classroom, so they will need to understand the new policy and how they will implement it next year.

6. Finance Council – Budget is finalized for the 2024-2025 school year. The Finance Council would like this group to discuss service hours and how tithing should be impacted positively through the extension of school choice vouchers.
7. For the good of the cause
  - a. Ice Cream Social – no set date yet. Amy is working on a date and organizing. This will be after the school year starts.
  - b. New family orientation is on or about July 25 at 6:00 p.m. Child care will be offered for that event.
  - c. Back to school night is August 1 likely at 7:00 p.m. Begins at the church and moves to the school.
  - d. Next School Advisory Meeting will August 8 at 6:00 p.m.