



**ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

Lighting the Way ~ Rejoicing in Our Journey

MINUTES

CATHOLIC FAITH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, February 9, 2015 – 5:00 p.m.

Main Boardroom – Catholic Education Centre

Chair: Ann Sutton, Superintendent of Education

Trustee:

Administration:

Present: Adrien Gagnier – Vice Principal, St. Anne Catholic School, Blenheim
Joan Martell – Teacher & Faith Ambassador, Sacred Heart Catholic School, Port Lambton
Kerry Matthyssen – Principal, Georges P. Vanier Catholic School, Chatham
Cindy Waddick – Elementary Chaplaincy Leader
Joseph Palko – Chaplain, St. Patrick’s Catholic High School, Sarnia
Cory Baillergeon – Teacher, St. Anne’s Catholic School, Blenheim
Michelle McLean – Parent, St. Anne Catholic School, Blenheim
Christine Lambert – Principal, Sacred Heart Catholic School, Port Lambton
Chris St. Amand – Teacher, Holy Trinity Catholic School, Sarnia
Terri Sinasac – Teacher, Elementary Literacy/Numeracy, Curriculum Elementary
Dino Petrucci – Teacher, St. Patrick’s Catholic Secondary School, Sarnia
Raymond Girard – Teacher, Ursuline College Catholic Secondary School, Chatham
Kim Gaiswinkler – French as a Second Language Teacher, St. Ursula Catholic School, Chatham

Regrets: Rob Cicchelli – Principal, St. Patrick’s Catholic Secondary School, Sarnia
Brenda Rumble – Trustee
Fr. Jim Higgins – Episcopal Vicar, Sarnia Deanery
Marcia Vermey – French Immersion Parent, St. Anne Catholic School, Blenheim
Jennifer Vilaranda – Chaplaincy Leader, Ursuline College Catholic Secondary School, Chatham

Recording Secretary: Libby Hallett

1. Welcome and Introductions

Ann Sutton, chair of the meeting, welcomed those in attendance.

2. *Opening Prayer – All; led by Cindy Waddick*

3. *Approval of Agenda*

Motion: (Cory Baillergeon and Joan Martell) That the Agenda for the Catholic Faith Advisory Committee Meeting of February 9, 2015 be approved as printed. Carried.

4. *Approval of Minutes*

Ann Sutton requested clarification on item 5.2 from the November 3, 2014 minutes. Terri Sinasac confirmed that new curriculum will be available in Spring 2015, for implementation in Fall 2015.

Cindy Waddick updated the Committee on the Adult Faith Initiatives, stating that the Faith Formation Day in October ran in the north with 12 participants. The same number of participants is expected again in the north schools, with 8 participants in the south next time.

Motion: (Terri Sinasac and Christine Lambert) That the Minutes for the Catholic Faith Advisory Committee Meeting of Monday, November 3, 2014 be approved as printed. Carried.

5. *Business Arising*

5.1 *Retention History*

Copies of retention data were handed out to the committee. The data outlined the retention of students from Grades 8 to 9. The committee broke into groups of 2-3 people to analyze the data, identifying possible trends to predict how many Grade 8 students would remain with the board between 2014-15 and 2015-16.

The committee then had a round table discussion to discuss any trends they had identified independently. Ann Sutton stated that overall there is slightly less than 75% retention from Grades 8-9, and therefore in the transition from Elementary to Secondary the opportunity for faith formation as the students' age from children to young adults is being missed.

Other trends identified were as follows:

- Decline in students from St. Elizabeth and Holy Family continuing on to Ursuline College
- Fewer students remaining with the board in the transition to Secondary that live in more rural locations (Forest, Petrolia etc) possibly due to public schools being located in those cities

5.2 Retention Survey Results and Draft Recommendations

A. Presentation of Survey Results

31 people participated in the survey. Under the “additional comments” section many comments were made, however repetition and overlap were common (i.e. the importance of students to continue their education in Catholic high school, the importance of faith in our schools, and making our schools more visible in the press). It was noted that the numbers displayed on the survey are somewhat misleading because of the “N/A’s” that factored into the percentages.

Ann Sutton stated that Dan Parr is looking for 2-5 recommendations for retention as a result of this survey that must meet two criteria: low cost and high yield. The committee then broke into small discussion groups of 2-3 people to identify possible recommendations. The committee broke from discussion for dinner at 5:55pm, and resumed discussions at 6:25pm.

B. Critical Discussion/Draft Recommendations

Upon resuming, Ann Sutton led a critical discussion session to address the recommendations each group had identified. Recommendations brought forward are as follows:

Showcase our schools in the newspaper by:

- Utilizing the local newspaper in communities
- Having principals (or designate) convey pictures from the school directly through the newspaper (without consultation with Todd Lozon)

Offer extended opportunities (e.g. chess, science fair, robotics):

- Ann Sutton stated that we are already doing this by utilizing SEF self-evaluations and EQAO data
- Also we cannot do beyond what we are currently doing, as all are extra-curricular activities and we cannot force staff/students to participate

Offering more classes:

- Classes involving machine shop/evaluating small engines/auto-mechanic might help to retain students living in rural locations
- Making students more aware of what is already being offered at the secondary level. This could be done through developing promotional videos to have available on the website, showcasing various programs (cosmetology, culinary arts, forklift licensing)

Faith-based retreat for school administrators:

- Could be used to get people to deeply reflect on faith for leadership
- More work can be done at the staff-level to explain to teachers that this is not simply a vacation for administrators

- This could be done through having a staff meeting following the retreat for Principals to share and bring back the faith-based knowledge they acquired
- A script could be prepared for the Principals to follow to talk to the teachers about the retreat and what they learned for faith-based leadership

A float in the parade (St. Michael's Kingdom assignment):

- The board logo could be utilized on the float, however liability issues could arise

Cross-parallel opportunities:

- Need to standardize what is already occurring so that expectations can be developed
- Could start with having the relationship continue between Muskoka Woods leaders and the students (real value in peer-to-peer interactions)
- Have high school spirit wear available to elementary schools (e.g. "Future Irish" or "Future Lancer"), having the high school logos on elementary wear, and continuing to work with elementary for Irish Miracle

Focus more on parent than student when decisions need to be made:

- Could be done by sending letters sent home addressed to the parent, telling the parents that it is their decision, continuing to bring spiritual and educational reasons to the forefront
- A parent night could be set up (to be organized individually by each school) for Grade 6/7/8 parents who are on the fence, focusing on faith-based learning

Utilization of social media to talk proactively about what is going on in secondary schools:

- Setting up a video feed into elementary schools from secondary schools could create a link for secondary students to visit elementary schools (must be a moderated site)

Continued display and emphasis of Catholic values

- Not enough people know about the programs we currently have, and therefore we must promote these (secular humanism, catholic faith and gospel values)
- Joseph Palko stated that we could come up with a program to help instill faith at a young age

5.3 *Projects 2014 – 2015*

Deferred to next meeting.

6. *New Business*

Deferred to next meeting.

7. *School Reports*

Kerry Matthyssen: The retreat with Cindy was lovely, and made a difference in the schools

Adrien Gagnier: Will talk about retreat next meeting

Ann Sutton: Thanked everyone for their input on the survey, explicitly thanking the sub-committee and Christine Lambert for their work on turning raw results into something comprehensive.

8. *Closing Prayer; led by Cindy Waddick.*

9. *Adjournment*

MOTION: (Raymond Girard and Adrien Gagnier) To adjourn the meeting.
Carried.

The Catholic Faith Advisory Committee Meeting of Monday, February 9, 2015 at 7:04 pm.

Next CFAC Meeting Dates:

April 27th, 2015