

St. Maria Goretti Home & School Association
Board Meeting Minutes
August 26, 2020

Members Present

Father Scott Emerson
Liz Young, Principal
Dianne Metz, Assistant Principal
Anne Mortensen, Teacher Representative
Beth Wilson, Staff Representative

Sherry Block, VP/Enrichment
Lisa Conwell, Treasurer
Wayne Crokus, President
Brian Golden, New Board Member
Tiffany Golden, Social
Julie Henrickson, Room Parent Coordinator
Alecia Jacobson, Social
Kimber Liedl, Secretary
Colleen Martinelli, Room Parent Coordinator

I. Call to Order & Opening Prayer

II. Father Scott Emerson Update

Father Scott commended Liz, Dianne, the school administration, and teachers for their work in preparation for the upcoming school year. Father plans to be at school daily to help with school operations. He encouraged board members and St. Maria Goretti Elementary School parents to reach out to him with any questions or concerns.

Father provided an update on the lawsuit between the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) and St. Maria Goretti Elementary School. The lawsuit was filed over MMSD's busing changes that would require SMG to push back the school day. The lawsuit went before the court on July 20th and the court provided a stay. They did not decide on the lawsuit since MMSD does not currently need the services due to the school district's virtual instruction during COVID-19. For now, SMG will receive busing at the same time as the previous school year.

Regarding the pending Dane County school closure litigation, a case will be filed with the court on Friday with St. Ambrose Academy et al vs Dane County Executive Joe Parisi. Father said that 85% of SMG students were planning to return to school in person. SMG is signing onto the case with seven other parish schools and various families. St.

Ambrose is paying for costs associated with the lawsuit. The SMG parish is supporting the parish families who are plaintiffs in the case.

Besides the case that will be filed on Friday, there are two other lawsuits filed against Dane County over the school closure. One lawsuit was filed on Tuesday as well as another case filed today by the Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty.

The goal is to start school on Tuesday, Sept 9th.

III. Secretary's Report

Chris Hammond will be taking over the secretary responsibilities for the 2020-2021 school year. She was not able to attend today's meeting, but she will assume her new role for future meetings.

IV. Principal's Report

Liz said that the teachers are doing an amazing job planning for every possible school scenario for the upcoming school year. Dianne will be sending an updated health and safety protocol to parents on Friday. School pick up is next Thursday for students who are receiving virtual instruction. SMG is waiting on additional computers to be delivered for students.

Dianne said that setting the school schedules this year is like a Rubik's cube on steroids as everyone has had to adapt to school changes due to COVID-19. The teachers are remaining positive and are eager to be back with the students.

V. Teacher's Report

Anne reported that the teachers are taking the changing school structure in stride. Overall, they were feeling comfortable with the original plan to return to school for in person instruction. The teachers and administration had positive, constructive dialogue in preparation for this school year. Overall, Anne thinks that staff are excited to be back and are approaching the school year with a positive attitude.

Regarding enrollment, Beth reported that SMG has 408 students enrolled for the upcoming school year, out of a potential 450 students. SMG has never been fully enrolled. The 3-year-old and 4-year-old kindergarten programs had decreased enrollment due to COVID-19, and the 4K teacher is not returning to SMG this school year. As a result, there will not be preschool this school year. SMG plans to have it the following school year. For now, SMG will use the 4K classroom as an isolation room for students who are sick.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Social Committee Report

Alecia said that SMG normally hosts a coffee for parents on the first day of school, but COVID-19 changes that. The social committee is trying to consider

things that could be done for parents of kindergarteners such as a brief, socially distanced meet and greet or a drive through coffee.

Beth said that SMG is asking parents to not congregate at the school before or after school. The school cannot allow tutors or Title 2 teachers in the building, and they cannot let parents in the building for a meet and greet.

Tiffany suggested organizing welcome bags for parents. Beth said that the school is planning that, and she encouraged the board to add things to the bags.

B. Enrichment Report

Nothing to report

C. Development Committee Report

Nothing to report

D. Treasurer's Report

Lisa reported that the Home and School Board ended the last school year at \$37,461. Normally, we anticipate \$25,000 in income from the SCRIP Program and at least \$9,000 from the SMG rummage sale, which wasn't able to be held in March. Despite that, there is still some money in the Home and School Board account to help the school with whatever is needed. It is difficult to anticipate whether the SCRIP sales will pick up when school is back in session.

Pre-COVID, the Home and School Board would receive \$15,000 in SCRIP sales in January and \$10,000 in July. Lisa asked the board whether the anticipated amount should be adjusted down for this school year. There was board discussion over the fact that there will be less money spent by some of the committees due to COVID-19 limitations. Wayne recommended that board members reach out to Lisa to discuss their past committee budgets and project what they may be this upcoming school year.

E. Public Relations Report

Nothing to report. It has been difficult to do anything right now due to COVID-19

F. Room Parent Coordinator Report

Julie said that they are waiting to see how the school year unfolds. Currently, parents are not allowed in the school and there are limitations as to what can be done due to COVID.

VII. Open Positions/New Member Recruitment

Brian Golden is interested in joining the SMG Home and School Board. He said that he can bring some new ideas and a different lens to the board. He is willing to fill any vacant position.

On the topic of recruiting new members, Sherry asked about the purpose and vision for the Home and School Board. She said that without a clear vision, it is hard to recruit to the board. Father Scott responded that the Home and School Board's purpose is to draw families closer into the SMG community and to provide an avenue for them to voice their concerns to the administration. Sherry asked if there is a way for the board to be more effective and engage more families and parents. She posed the question to the board, asking if everyone likes the board's current structure and role.

Wayne encouraged everyone to rethink their positions, roles, and responsibilities, and reflect on what we can do during this unusual time to bring a fresh perspective.

Liz agreed, saying that SMG and the board has a unique opportunity to reinvent the wheel and rebuild to better address the needs of our students.

Anne pointed out that the Home and School Board has changed over the years compared to what it was 20 years ago. We have an opportunity to rewrite it for the years ahead.

Brian suggested that the board members ground themselves in the vision and mission of SMG and use that as a foundation to move forward. What is the goal of each position and how do they support the vision and mission of the school? What describes success? How does it measure up against the success criteria? We should network with other Catholic schools to see how they organize their boards and measure success.

Father Scott said that Bishop Hyine wants everyone to reflect on our church and promote an evangelization initiative called *Go Make Disciples*. The bishop plans to introduce this initiative to SMG families next spring. More information is available on the diocese website, <https://madisondiocese.org/gmd>

VIII. Other Business

Beth thanked the families of SMG for their support of the school as well as their donations. Families have been very generous, purchasing air purifiers for every classroom and playground equipment in preparation for the upcoming school year.

IX. Close

Next meeting is October 14, 2020. A motion to adjourn was made by Lisa with a second by Sherry. Meeting adjourned.