

St. Mary Education Committee

November 20, 2024 – 5:30 pm

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Matt Durbin, David Gavin, Amanda Wurth, Andrew DuPerrieu, Blake Cvengros, Paul Humm, Austin Smith, Father Gary Clark, Colleen Stovesand, Kristen Stone

Members Not Present: Krista Lea

St. Mary /Diocesan Staff Present: Monica Hayden, Mary Smith, Ashley Wright, Doug Shelton

Meeting Called to Order – 5:30 pm

Opening Prayer

Approval of Minutes – Approved with corrections

Episcopal Vicar Update

The church has the view that we should have the crucified Christ and not the Resurrected Christ in spaces used for liturgical purposes. A crucifix donated by Bernard Higdon will go in the commons to replace the Resurrected Christ. We will need an additional crucifix for the library. Resurrected Christ cannot be used during mass or any liturgical functions.

Feast of Immaculate Conception (Dec 8th) is normally moved to the next day and is not normally a feast of obligation. The Vatican has ruled the obligation should follow the feast day. We will do a remembrance in schools on the 9th and ask the students to go to their parish for mass. A communication will be sent out to families.

Administrative Updates

Director Updates – Verbal

Mrs. Hayden attended a leadership conference in Paris, TN where representatives from the KY Center for School Safety were in attendance to discuss school safety. We will have them on site to do an assessment. We will be forming a threat assessment team.

For the safety grant discussed in the previous SMEC meeting, we will have to show where the lighting is going to be located. This is part of a requirement to assess environmental and historical conditions. The goal is to finish the assessment by the spring so the improvements can be completed over the summer.

Representatives from the system attended the Paducah Chamber annual Salute to Education breakfast. All of the schools in the county set up a table with information about their schools. Students are there to meet the chamber members and tell them about all of the great things the schools are doing. We had four students from the ES, MS and HS, as well as the HS counselor Mitzi Englebright, Lisa Zakutney, Ashley Wright, and Mrs. Hayden. The speaker was the president of the University of Louisville.

Expenses for the auction were approximately \$45,000.

For those requesting tuition assistance, going forward we would like to have prior years taxes. Currently taxes are accepted for the year before. This is due to timing. Currently, only one W-2 had to be submitted. Once the information has been submitted to FACTS it can't be changed. The Grant meeting held in April for tuition assistance previously required 2022 taxes and 2023 W-2's. Moving forward would like to have both from the same year. This may require a second grant meeting later in the year.

Elementary School – Verbal

4th grade just completed the Saint Wax Museum project. Mrs. Smith was impressed with the students and teachers.

Jr. Vikings in in process. Basketball times and schedules are set. There a few details still to be worked out for the cheer program.

Have another new student starting at the elementary school.

5th grade has a trip to the Challenger Learning Center. This is sponsored by PIE so is offered at no cost to the students or school.

Held a half day PD session on grief training which included skills to help kids cope with grief. After the session there was a good follow-up session with the staff.

Mrs. Smith finished a 56-hour course on cognitive coaching and is now certified. She is excited to apply what she has learned.

High/Middle School – Written

Committee Reports

Academics

Have had multiple meetings. Looking at the review process. Feel good about the development of a more authentic review process and feel the diocese will support our process once completed.

Advancement

Held a meeting in October and will meet again in December. Have a plan to develop stakeholders for the Annual Fund. Will work on a fundraising calendar. Plan to expand the advancement office.

Catholic Identity

Have a goal to increase student participation in Liturgical activities. HS/MS students lack enthusiasm about participation. Reached out to each parish for information about participation at the parish level. Planning a survey for HS/MS students to get their feedback.

Enrollment

Have developed a list of extra curriculars offered and the number of students participating. Are looking at reasons why people aren't sending their kids to SMSS.

Facilities

Jeff H and Monica met last week to review HVAC concerns. Working with Jeffrey Jett to get information on current status and future needs. The chiller for the commons area has a broken part. The part is on order and the chiller has been jumped to make it work for the interim. This is not related to the air handler that Alpha changed out. Have asked for a price on a new chiller. The existing chiller is 24 years old. Jeff met with ABC Controls as an ongoing issue is that we cannot control the temps in the buildings. There was some event years ago - perhaps a lightning strike - that did something to the computer or software, or it just got so old it could not be updated. Jeff was going to ask them to put a proposal together on updating the system to allow controls and setting. It sounded costly but something we need to look into.

Finance

Finance Committee has not met yet due to the auction. Will hold first meeting in the near future.

Governance

Held a meeting with Rosanne Whiting. Discussed the goal of 100% support from SMEC. Looking to streamline communication.

Student Life – No Report

Old Business – Referral Program – Need to finalize

Agreed to change the referral program to give \$500 to both the referring family and the referred family.

New Business – ES Parking – Paducah Water

Mrs. Hayden will move pursue the option to expand the elementary school parking lot onto property owned by Paducah Water.

Next Meeting – January 22, 2025

Closing Prayer

ST MARY MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL
Principal's Report – Douglas Shelton
November, 2024

Exactly one month to go to close out the first semester of the 2024/2025 school year. We've seen wonderful gains by MS students in MAP testing scores, as well as, outstanding ACT scores for our High Schoolers--some as young as Sophomores are earning scores worthy of multiple college scholarships! An energetic and well attended "Blue and Gold Night" has ushered in the high school basketball season, as the middle school basketball teams have a handful of wins under their belt. Reconciliations, Vocations, and Masses have all buoyed the spiritual side of our students, as we approach the season of Advent. Here are some of the happenings at St. Mary Middle/High Schools since Fall Break....

Academic / Culture Accomplishments

- All Middle School Teachers participated in a "Student Shadow Day" to get a better understanding of "student life", and were able to share thoughts and experiences during the Nov. 8th PD Day.
- HS teachers explored alternative instructional strategies NOT involving grading as the accountability measure, rather looking at PBL (Project Based Learning) as a method of education that's being used exclusively at some newer charter schools. Faculty discussed the pros/cons on the Nov. 8th PD Day.
- Once again the MS/HS commons was transformed into a Christmas paradise, as it hosted the 2024 St. Mary Benefit Auction.
- The HS Student Senate held a Blood Drive that met the donation quota needed to provide a scholarship to a Senior later this spring.
- P/T Conferences were held to update parents how their student(s) is doing after the first quarter of the school year.
- Both the MS and HS academic teams have a lot to be proud of with both teams winning several quick recall matches, as well as individuals performing well in assessment/writing competitions across multiple subject areas.
- The 6th Grade class went to the Challenger Center and completed a mission to the moon!
- The HS Chemistry teams competed well at the MSU Chemistry Scholarship Tournament

Athletic Accomplishments / Notes

- Blue/Gold Night was well attended and featured festive competitions between current players and alumni. All Fall sports teams were introduced, as well.

-
- The Middle School Boys and Girls basketball teams have several wins under their belt, with each team only two hard fought losses so far, both appear able to make a run in the postseason this year!
 - The HS weight room is in the middle of a renovation, which should be completed before Christmas break.
 - The Auxiliary gym has proven to be a great asset to the school in its ability to host practices and games in order to free up the HS gym for use.
 - Gabby Ault and Addie Perkins represented St. Mary at the KHSAA Cross Country State Tournament in Lexington.
 - Our very own William Babbs earned the silver medal at the WKU 2024 World Championships for Martial Arts in Rhodes, Greece last month!

Spiritual / Service Notes

- Both schools participated in Reconciliation services in mid-October.
- Students were vital in preparing the school for the 2024 Benefit Auction, as well as, the clean up of this event.
- All Saints Day System Mass was a success, and was well attended.
- Religion classes participated in completing a "Kindness Chain" for World Kindness Day held earlier this month.
- The Freshmen had a wonderful class retreat at St. Francis, led by the Senior Class.
- The Senior Class is completing hand quilted scarfs for a benefit sponsored by the Guess Foundation.
- High Schoolers have attended Mass 3 times and the Middle Schoolers twice in the last 6 weeks.

**Advancement Report for SMEC
November 2024**

Annual Fund and Tuition Assistance:

2024-2025 Goals:

- Annual Fund includes Viking Society contributions and runs from July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025.

Fundraising 2024-25 (July 1-June 30)	Goal	As of 11/18/24
Annual Fund (Including Viking Society)	\$300,000	\$210,641
Fr. Lew White <i>(Catholic Only Tuition Assistance)</i>	\$40,000	\$52,973
General Tuition Assistance <i>(Catholic and Non-Catholic Tuition Assistance)</i>	\$100,000	\$103,915
Total	\$440,000	\$367,529

- As of 11/18//2024, we have raised **\$221,860 in Restricted Gifts** (Weight Room Renovation, maintenance funding, grant funding for an audit, Adopt-a-Class/Adopt-a-Subject, funding for drama club, etc.)
- As of 11/18/2024, **Booster Club has received \$33,052** in sponsorships and team specific donations.

Grants:

We have applied for three grants in October and November totaling :

1. New Academic Team equipment and supplies for elementary and middle school teams. (\$1,050)
2. New Science Kits for 6th-8th grade. (\$6,002)
3. Additional Science Lab supplies for the high school science classes.(\$5,394)

Enrollment:

- We have one new student starting school on Monday (2nd grader). We have a family of three who are in the process of enrolling. Their children will start after Christmas. (Grades: 3rd, K and PK4). We have a new 8th grader who is in the process of enrolling. They are moving from Virginia and will be in Paducah in January.
- We had two middle school students transfer to public school in November. This was a mutual decision between the administration and the families.

-
- Six tours to new families were given In October and November for the upcoming 2025-2026 school year. Registration for next year has not opened, but one family has already committed to come and has students in 2nd and 6th grade. Two other families will be moving into the area as well and are likely to enroll for 2025/2026. One will be a sophomore and the other family has two children who will be in 7th and 8th grades.

St. Mary 2024 Auction

The 20th St. Mary Dinner and Benefit Auction was held on Saturday, November 9th, 2024. There were approximately 320 attendees and nearly 100 volunteers. The dinner and bar were catered by Artisan Kitchen. This was the first time we have used them for the auction and we have received very positive feedback.

There were several changes to the auction this year. While change is hard, it was time to refresh and recharge the auction. Below is a recap of the changes:

- No Friday night silent and oral auction
- Cash bar instead of bring your own alcohol (each auction ticket included two drink tickets)
- Two closings of silent auction sections instead of four. In addition, the silent auction closed completely before the live auction began.
- No Big Board on Saturday night
- Added the Golden Ticket – buy a ticket for \$100 for a chance to win one of five prizes
- Exclusive Yeti cups - \$50 each and included one drink ticket
- Fund – a – Need – a specific monetary campaign to help with maintenance costs at both buildings, grounds, etc. This included a specially made video to accompany the ask.
- Increased individual ticket price from \$50 to \$100
- Offered varying level sponsorships
- Bidder paddles

The Auction Committee had our “lessons learned” post auction meeting on Monday, November 18th. We have already identified small tweaks that we’ll make in 2026 to items above that will continue to improve the auction! For instance, we’ve suggested wine bottle service for tables, water dispensers at the iced tea table, and noise makers to get the crowds attention when silent auction sections are closing. Overall, we feel the changes were received very positively and we’ve received great feedback from the attendees.

One of the biggest questions we faced was “With canceling Friday night and Big Board, how will you make up those funds?” Here is a breakdown of those funding sources from 2022:

2022 Event	Amount
Friday Night Silent	\$4,435.00
Friday Night Live	\$13,500.00
Big Board	\$34,710.00
Saturday Night Silent	\$54,650.00
Saturday Night Live	\$154,500.00
Tickets and donations	\$30,000.00
Total	\$291,795.00

The gross sales for both nights for the 2022 auction were \$291,795.00. This includes \$70,000.00 for the two winners of the Big Sky, Montana house. There were 208 silent auction items which averaged \$262/item.

The 2024 auction proceeds were as follows:

2024 Event	Amount
Golden Ticket	\$8,100.00
Fund a Need	\$20,050.00
Yeti cups	\$4,550.00
Saturday Night Silent	\$67,445.00
Saturday Night Live	\$114,300.00
Sponsorships	\$22,375.00
Tickets and donations	\$33,180.00
Total	\$270,000.00

The gross sales for the 2024 auction were \$270,000.00. This includes \$40,000.00 for the winner of the Big Sky, Montana house. There were 223 silent auction items which averages \$302/item.

The MT house is truly an outlier for both years. If those sales are backed out, you'll see that both auctions are very close in gross proceeds. We feel we had successful auction!

Feel free to email me with any questions you may have. Robin.mowers@smss.org