

**St. Mary of the Lake Catholic School Education Commission
Meeting Minutes – Monday, October 5, 2009**

PRESENT: Paul Oselka, Karla Madison, Joseph Bardusk, Gina Wilkinson, Renate Zavesky, Mark Smith, Patricia Carpenter, Father Jim Morris

Meeting called to order by Joseph Bardusk at 7:38 pm

Prayer led by Father Jim.

A motion was made to approve tonight's meeting agenda by Mark Smith and was seconded by Patricia Carpenter. The agenda was approved.

Mark Smith moved to approve the minutes from the meeting of September 14, 2009. Paul Oselka seconded this move. Minutes were approved.

Paul Oselka introduced two representatives from Horizon Bank. They spoke about a program that they offer that would allow low interest loans to cover tuition. These loans would be for a 10 month period and would be an opportunity for school families to create strong credit and the bank offers this loan program as a community service. Several members of the audience asked questions about the program and wanted to know if this would replace the current "FACTS" monthly tuition program that the school currently uses. The fact that the Horizon loan program would charge interest and would not provide the money up front to SML did not make it a program that many members of the audience would want to switch to. Paul Oselka and Joe Bardusk thanked the representatives from Horizon Bank for coming.

Communication: No written Communication was presented. Verbal communication – Gina Wilkinson reported on the "Cash for Gold" fundraiser and the first installment of funds totaled \$4,322.19 of which \$1,975.00 was being allocated to the school (the rest to the Parish). A big thanks to Gina Wilkinson for implementing this very successful program. The program will continue for several months to see if we can generate more donations.

Comments from the President: Joseph Bardusk said that it was great to see a good amount of parents at the meeting and that it was the largest group so far. Please encourage your fellow parents to come. This creates a tight and caring community and it is how schools survive and thrive..

Pastor Report: Father Jim also thanked all for coming and reported that Principal Kathleen Kelly could not attend tonight because she was ill.

Financial Report: Mark Smith is reported that the Finance Committee is working on filling the deficit the school is facing. Financially, SML School has its ups and downs and most Catholic and private schools in the U.S. are all having the same issues.

Committee Reports: Marketing – Patricia Carpenter is looking to build on the momentum that was created at the September Education Commission Meeting and the beginning of the school year. There was a Marketing Committee meeting and it was asked of Principal Kathleen Kelly that there be a greeting person such as herself,

aided by a greeting committee, to help welcome and greet the students and families coming in the school in the morning and leaving the school in the afternoon. The Marketing Committee is also working on a newsletter that will be distributed every other month. There are many new things happening at SML and these things would be highlighted in the newsletter such as celebrating successes, the new and improved website, letters from the Principal, etc. Kathleen Kelly shared with the Marketing Committee that she attended a Diocese Seminar about Advancement for schools. Creating an Advancement program would help build a financial base with long range goals. Patricia Carpenter also announced that the Marketing Committee was aiming to have further Friday morning meetings when all could meet and that they were also creating a school brochure.

Joe Bardusk commented that the school is always looking for good press. An idea came up that the classroom parents could take photos of each special event and the Marketing Committee could help submit these photos and small stories about our events for the school newsletter and for local papers.

Jennifer Coffeen, on behalf of the Home and School Association made a report. On October 15th at 7:00 pm there will be the first HSA meeting. All parents are encouraged to attend. One very exciting project that is being worked on by the Association is the opening of the SML Student Store in the office area next to Mrs. Kittleson's office. All kinds of items will be available for purchase including greeting cards, school pencils, water bottles, erasers, little goodies. In addition, they would like to help the students start a newspaper and also have the children's Christmas crafts be available for sale. The first meeting is going to be a brainstorming meeting. Co-President Diane Giancaspro spoke of the need to empower the class moms and to keep open about problems and the keep positive communications flowing throughout the school. She also offered "I Love St. Mary's" buttons to all attending tonight's meeting.

Old Business: Horizon Bank – having listened to the presentation at the beginning of the meeting, it was the consensus that this may not be a program we are interested in at this time.

New Business: Title 1 money. This could not be addressed in light of Principal Kathleen Kelly's absence.

Karla Madison read an e-mail from parent Tracy Ripley, requested the use of a traffic or crossing guard in the morning and afternoon for children walking or on bikes who need to cross Buffalo St. Highway by the Church. Joe Bardusk asked for a copy of this letter and that it also be sent to Kathleen Kelly and said it would be acted upon with the City of New Buffalo Police Department. Karla Madison agreed to forward this e-mail and correspondence relating to it.

The next SML School Education Commission meeting is set for 7:30 pm on Monday, November 2, 2009 in the school cafeteria.

Joe Bardusk moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm and it was seconded by Mark Smith. The meeting was adjourned.