St. Bernadette PTO General Membership Meeting

Wednesday, March 19, 2014

7:05-7:45 p.m.

School Cafeteria

In attendance: Mr. Kelleher, , Jeanmarie Spradlin, Joy Disy, Kim Jones, Mary Fedorochko, Jim Shepherd, Rose Kwiatkowski, Chris Popeck and approximately 40 PTO members including faculty and parents.

1. Opening Prayer (Mrs. Spradlin)
2. President's Report (Mrs. Spradlin)
    a. Thank you for attending tonight's meeting.
    b. Thank you to all who supported and helped at the Disco Dance Friday night, especially the Grade Reps and Mrs. Kwiatkowski. We will be able to donate a fair amount to the Stackhouse-Weiner children.
    c. Called for Nominations for next year's PTO Board. All nominations must be submitted by April 15th.
3. Treasurer's Report (Mr. Shepherd)
    a. Proposed 2014-2015 budget was presented to the General Membership.
        i. $38,000 in the hole after the auction but there was a surplus of $53,000 from last year.
        ii. Lots of funds we cannot count on. Many sacrifices were made.
        iii. Teacher wish list was moved to a fundraiser using $400/teacher as the basis.
        iv. There were several cuts to teacher and staff programs and PTO operating expenses.
        v. Elimination of the field trip buses is the most significant change.
    b. Questions:
        i. Will the buses be paid out of the parents pockets? Mr. Shepherd responded that is correct.
        ii. Why did the dues go down to $4,500? Mr. Shepherd responded due to the dues being optional.
        iii. How many parents/families opted out? Mr. Shepherd responded that we don't have the exact number.
    c. Mr. Shepherd continued that we need to account for the classroom enhancement fee (year-end party) and planners as they are not optional and must be paid.
4. Ways and Means (Mrs. Fedorochko)
    a. Ways and Means is quiet now.
    b. Thank you to all who have sent in checks for the teacher wish list. Please keep sending them in.
    c. EPI School Supplies list is in process. Planners are already ordered.
5. Grade Representatives (Mrs. Popeck)
    a. Thank you to all who helped with the dance. It was a great success.

6. Principal's Report (Mr. Kelleher)
    a. $3,237.00 was raised at the dance and the tag day for the Stackhouse-Weiner family. The dance raised over $1,800.00. The tag day raised over $1,400.00. He will make sure the family receives the money soon and that they are aware the money is coming. Thank you to all the parents that went beyond the $1.00 donation for the dress down day.
    b. New counselor Eve Montavon will begin on April 1st. She will work 20 hours a week, which will be two full days and one part time day.
    c. We have said goodbye to Mrs. Witko. Mrs. Geri Posner will be filling in until a permanent replacement is found by the time we come back from Easter break.
    d. Mrs. Deal is back to be our school nurse until the end of the school year. We are currently interviewing for a full time nurse for next year.
    e. Thank you to all who have re-registered for next year. If you have not sent in your paperwork please do.
    f. Working with OneLife Fitness for a free two week pass for all our teachers. That open-house is from March 15th-28th.
    g. The National Evangelization Team (NET) ministries conduct retreats for school age children. Saint Bernadette School will start this year for the 8th grade Confirmation Retreat and next year for the middle school retreats. This was a recommendation from the DFE Team.
    h. The Enrollment Management Team has done a lot of great work this year. Taking a harder look at a Gifted & Talented Program for next year. Working with Ms. Winter and hope to have this program started in August.
    i. The Gardening Club has 4 students participating and Nalls Produce came out to show us how to plant and water seeds.
    j. Cardinal Run Club was started by Mrs. Kelleher and currently has 30 students participating.
    k. Questions
        i. Where is the school with eliminating PE one day a week since we will be having a school mass once a week? PE uniforms cost $54 but it will only be worn once a week due to the change in uniform for school mass days. Mr. Kelleher responded that the middle school will not have mass on PE days. The lower grades will and will be permitted to wear their tennis shoes. Saint Bernadette School is in the minority of Catholic schools who don't attend mass as a community on a weekly basis.
        ii. Was there a letter sent out separately about the PTO dues being optional? Mr. Kelleher responded that there was and it was included in the re-registration packet.
        iii. A question was asked why the fees were made optional. This is a decision of Fr. Kevin's. Mr. Kelleher followed-up that the dues don't go to the PTO directly. This is not a required payment for re-registration. The separation was made by including the work "optional". Follow-up question was asked. Previously it was the responsibility of the PTO/HSG to collect the dues. Is it now the PTO's responsibility to enforce this? The Charter Chair responded that the fees are "optional". No parent here wants it to be that way but Fr. Kevin is the decision maker so this is how it is. Follow-up question was asked if a letter can go out at the beginning of the school year asking for the dues because there is a lot of money to pay up front with all of the other re-registration fees.

Mr. Kelleher replied that a refresher letter or email can be sent out at the beginning at the school year. He continued that we have had a lot of checks coming in for next year's dues already. A comment was made that if parents know that programs will be cut, they will pay their dues.

iv. Mrs. Fedorochko noted what the dues cover and clarified those items that were eliminated from the proposed budget were not things covered by those dues.
    1. Mulch, which is required for the playground
    2. Cultural Arts Program
    3. Ice Cream Social
    4. Graduation reception
    5. First Communion reception
    6. Supplements the cost of the Fall Festival and dances
    7. We ran a golf tournament in the past to cover the buses ($16/student). If a parent can't afford to pay for a bus for a child's field trip they just need to contact Mr. Kelleher and he will make it happen.

v. What is classroom enhancement? Mr. Shepherd responded that $100 of the teacher wish list is classroom enhancement. The finance committee rolled that into the teacher wish list and increased that item to $400 per teacher.

vi. Do we think that the fact that there was no golf tournament this year is why some things were eliminated? Mrs. Fedorochko responded that it is a good chance. We can look at things and go back. The money for the buses was taken from our account in August. Do we want to take an $8,000 event and put it into buses, technology or the field?

vii. A parent commented that when the PTO ran the lunch program it made a fair amount of money, almost $20,000 so we can't compare this proposed budget with those of 3-4 years ago.

viii. Mr. Kelleher noted that the PTO does not have a separate account anymore, it is part of the school account. Just like the cafeteria is part of the school. It is an adjustment for everyone. Saint Bernadette has been operating as an anomaly. We have done well by issuing a separate letter.

7. Closing Prayer (Mrs. Spradlin)

Meeting Adjourns 8:05 p.m.