

St. Patrick School Board Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2015

In Attendance: Fr. Jeffery Shooner (Pastor), Dr. Michael Bratcher (Principal), Renee Puffer (Chairperson), Sean Cox (Vice Chairperson), Brad Savko, Kristie Thieman, Megan Kelley, Alissa Domine, Brian Fox, Susan Francke, Cheri Elmore (Recording Secretary), Nicole Burke (2014-15 PTO representative), Brittany Byrd (Faculty Representative), Charlene Bechely (Faculty Representative).

Absent: Chantal Prewitt, Stephanie Murphy, Fr. Chris Rhodes (Associate Pastor)

Pastor's Report: Freedom and Forgiveness theme will be the focus for the Easter season. Fr. Paul Farren, from the Derry Diocese in N. Ireland, will be speaking to the parish about God's gift of forgiveness as it is celebrated in the sacrament. He is the author of *Freedom and Forgiveness: A Fresh Look at the Sacrament of Reconciliation*. St. Patrick will provide Fr. Farren's book to about 1500 families.

Fr. Jeff thanked everyone for the event to celebrate the installation as our Pastor and the 10 year anniversary of his ordination. He had the opportunity to have friends and family attend this special event. It was a great to have the Archbishop attend. Fr. Jeff sincerely thanked everyone for their work to make the event so successful.

Principal's Report: This report provides an overview of the previous year and highlights a focus for the next 12 months.

2014 was an excellent year for St. Patrick Catholic School:

- Our Roman Catholic faith and identity continue to be our number one focus. Our Catholic identity permeates the overall school curriculum. From daily prayers and moral teachings to sacramental preparation and stewardship experiences, St. Patrick Catholic School students grow in their knowledge and love of their faith every day. Fr. Jeff Shooner, Fr. Chris Rhodes and Fr. Daniel Brandenburg continue teaching lessons in our religion classes, and the Respect Life committee conducts a three day lesson with students in grades 5-8.
- St. Patrick Catholic School students continue to post gains in standardized test scores as suggested by the stakeholder-driven AdvancED School Improvement Plan (SIP). A comprehensive eight-year test preparation program and alignment of the current curriculum and standards will be introduced at the start of the 2015-16 school year based on a required action suggestion from the accreditation process. A committee of teachers and parents are working on this implementation by conducting a trial with the STAR testing program. We will communicate more about the implementation this spring.
- The teaching staff at St. Patrick Catholic School is completing a book study on the *Leader in Me* program. The committee working with Mrs. Kayrouz should have a proposal for implementation to our stakeholders by the end of this school year.
- On September 30, 2014, St. Patrick Catholic School was named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence:
 - The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes schools where students perform at very high levels or where significant improvements are being made in students' levels of academic achievement. The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program sets a standard of excellence for all schools striving for the highest level of achievement.

- Schools that are ranked among the state’s highest performing schools as measured by state assessments or assessments referenced against national norms in both reading (English/language arts) and mathematics in at least the most recent year tested are considered.
- Saint Patrick Catholic School uses multiple sources of data in order to create the stakeholder-driven AdvancED School Improvement Plan and the school’s Long Range Plan. Terra Nova scores, ACRE (Assessment of Catechesis/Religion Education) tests, e-Walks (electronic walk-through) observations, and parent, teacher, and student surveys are some examples of data used to determine what the school needs to do to improve student learning.
 - Based on this data, the current stakeholder-driven AdvancED School Improvement Plan includes two goals: (1) student use of technology as a tool to promote higher order thinking skills; and (2) creating a more challenging curriculum for students who have a Cognitive Skills Index of 116 or above. The first goal was created from data collected from e-Walk observations and surveys. The second goal came from Terra Nova scores and parent surveys.
 - The SIP will revisit these goals this spring and adjust as needed.
 - The yearly test data provides the opportunity for teachers, parents, students, and the administration to track an increase in individual achievement levels. This same data provides the opportunity for teachers in grades 3 through 7 to evaluate the success of their instruction and to write grade level SMART (Strategic, Measurable, Attainable, Reasonable and Time-Bound) goals.
- The Class of 2014 was the 20th to graduate from St. Patrick Catholic School. 98.4 % of the class attended a Catholic high school.
- Mrs. Shannon Pritchett, kindergarten teacher, was honored with the Catholic Education Foundation’s Ulmer Award at the Archdiocesan Professional Development Day on August 8.
- Considerable planning took place to prepare for our growing student body. On August 19, 2014, St. Patrick Catholic School opened its doors for the 21st time in the school’s history. The school enrollment on August 19 was 671.
- St. Patrick Catholic School was named the October “School of the Month” in *Today’s Catholic Teacher* magazine. The publication goes to upwards of 12,000 schools across the country. The article highlighted the many ways the charism of St. Patrick are lived out on a daily basis in our parish-school.
- The faculty and staff at Saint Patrick Catholic School continue to exhibit many attributes of master teachers and are qualified to share strategies, techniques, and best practices with others. Within the school building, teachers share classroom ideas, assessments, and technology ideas during common planning time and Professional Learning Communities (PLC) meetings. At monthly faculty meetings, teachers who have been to regional and national conferences report what they have learned and demonstrate how to use specific strategies in the classroom.
- A majority of our teachers and staff attended a national or state conference in 2014 for professional development. Teachers attend state and national conferences to acquire innovative ways to present academic content to students. They use these innovations to improve student learning, to encourage student use of higher order thinking skills, and to influence students to become self-motivated learners.
- Nine new team members were added to an already dynamic teaching faculty and staff – Ms. Lauren Burch (art), Mrs. Mary Jo Brockie (7th/8th grade science), Mr. Thomas Czartorski (student technology coach), Ms. Meghan Heit (Jk-5 music), Ms. Jacqueline Pitino (3rd grade), Mrs. Jenifer Riley (7th/8th grade

math), Ms. Katelyn Spalding (6th grade). In addition, Mrs. Jaime Kayrouz (guidance counselor) and Mrs. Cherie Smart (6th – 8th grade assistant and science lab assistant) were hired as part of our team.

- A very successful Open House was held on October 21. We have remained in contact with every family who visited with us during Open House.
- The School Foundation continues to receive exceptional financial and voluntary support from parents and friends of St. Patrick, including the receipt of significant gifts for improvements in the areas of technology.
- Saint Patrick Catholic School continues to enhance a comprehensive communication plan for school families, parishioners, and the community. Teachers communicate classroom news through welcome letters, syllabi, newsletters, teacher pages on the school website, email, phone calls, and individual notes. The school office conveys information through the use of *The Pony* (school electronic newsletter), the school website, Facebook, Twitter, and the Honeywell Instant Alert System. Parents are informed about various topics before the school year began through orientation meetings, the school handbook, and mailings. Once the school year began, communication continued with mini-schedule nights, open houses, emails, and meetings.
- St. Patrick Catholic School enhanced an already respected reputation for the arts by offering very successful spring and fall drama productions, and by continuing the music academy, which is open to all students and includes classes in guitar, vocal lessons, piano, drums, violin, flute, and trumpet.
- St. Patrick Catholic School students, clubs, programs and teams continue to excel, including achievements in academics, the arts, student activities and community service.
- The School Board, PTO, Technology Committee, Parish and Finance council, continue to assist the school in meeting its mission.
- The school received constant recognition and attention from local media throughout the year.

Next School Board Meeting is scheduled: 3/12/15 at 6:00pm