

## **SJNCS Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, March 13, 2024**

**St. John Neumann Library**

**4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.**

I. Call to Order by Chair– 4:00 p.m.

Attendance: Kelly Mechelke, Principal; Fr. Joe Reed, Pastor; Mary Marlowe, Director of Admissions; Patrick Wade, Director of Development; Jenny Hay, Board Member; Will Silverberg, Board Member; Alex LaFasto, Vice-Chair Board Member; Jessica Louthan, Board Member, Steve Eckstein, Faculty Representative; Jennifer Dzermejko, PTMO President; Stephanie Greiner, Director of Communications (Recording Secretary)

Absent: Sabrina Talley, Academic Dean; Christine Roeck, Director of Human Resources and Account Management

II. Opening Prayer by Fr. Joe Reed

III. Discuss / Approve previous Meeting Minutes

- Motion to approve minutes
- **Vote:** Motion approved by unanimous aye

IV. Open Forum

A presentation by John Toliver introduced the idea for a campus WatchDOG (Dads of Great Students) program, where SJNCS dads would have a presence in the school to help with security and safety and assist teachers wherever needed. There was a discussion among board members about making the WatchDOG program part of PTMO with Mr. Toliver as the organizer. The members of the board would like Mr. Toliver to present more information on the next steps for beginning the program. There is a school with a program in Clarksville; it was requested that Mr. Toliver reach out to them to learn more about the details of how the program is successful in their school.

Meredith Reddington introduced a potential composting project. A bucket placed in the cafeteria could collect organic waste and then use it to create compost. This process takes about 3-6 months. Mrs. Reddington suggested ways that teachers could incorporate the program into different curricula. Board members discussed the potential of having a parishioner co-chair the program and help maintain it during the summer months. Parish youth groups like American Heritage Girls, Girl Scouts, Trail Life, etc., could also be involved. There is the potential for finding grants to cover the cost of the composter and other equipment. Jennifer Dzermejko will work with Ms. Reddington to put together a preliminary plan to present at a future meeting. A conversation also needs to be had with the cafeteria staff to learn their opinions on the best way to start the process in the cafeteria.

Beau Broussard's presentation discussed concerns regarding SJNCS's Catholic identity. He expressed concerns that library materials, art assignments, and theatre performances are too secular and do not align with Catholic teaching. Mr. Broussard also questioned whether students have opportunities for

confession and the Rosary and expressed concern about non-Catholic students' interactions with Catholic students.

The presenters and spectators were dismissed at the end of the open forum. They were requested to submit additional information to [advisoryboard@sjncs-knox.org](mailto:advisoryboard@sjncs-knox.org).

#### IV. Closed Meeting Discussion

The board members discussed potential ways to be more transparent and intentional about how our Catholic faith is expressed.

Summary of suggestions:

- Monday Chapel at the beginning of the day or during homeroom
- Lectio Divina on Wednesdays
- Adding a song time after All School Mass
- Teach more personal prayers
- Add a Catholic Identity Spotlight to the newsletter or a quarterly report
- Pastor's Lunches with non-Catholic students to help them understand what we do as Catholics.
- Add more information to the school website

As stated in the SAB Bylaws, board members agreed to hold presenters to specific time limits and not to allow spectators to speak during the open forum. Due to time, the discussion of Mr. Broussard's presentation will be tabled until the next meeting.

VI. Closing Prayer by Fr. Joe - Meeting adjourned at 5:33 pm