

**ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE SCHOOL PARENT'S ASSOCIATION  
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING**

Tuesday October 4, 2011

ATTENDEES: (33)

REGRETS:

SMCSPA Executive Members:

Gino Alberelli  
Deanna Biffis-Laikakos  
Kim DelMedico  
Sylvia Digby  
Darlene Emeny  
Catharina Gasser  
Kym Grippo  
Maria Hunt  
Dexter John  
Luba Mycak  
Clare Pelliccione  
Jennifer Ride Barker  
Julie Sartori  
Rocco Sebastiano  
Lucy Tatangelo  
Louise White  
Janette Wong

Elaine Francis  
Julian Geringer  
Anna Melfi  
Johanne Parent

SMCS Staff/Administration:

Fr. Redican  
Terry Sheridan

Other Parents:

Catherine Barker-Hoyes  
Lena Bauman  
Janet Bone  
Caroline Boulton  
Lai-Fun Choo  
Stephanie Gagne  
Margaret Gaus  
Karen Kennedy  
Anore Larosa  
Donna Marie Lingeman  
Donna Mulyka  
John Nunziata  
Josie Siciliano  
Claudia Tsihlias

Fr. Redican opened the meeting with a prayer.

Introduction from each person.

Minutes of May 3, 2011 were presented and approved by Kim DelMedico and seconded by Deanna Biffis-Liakakos.

### **SMCSPA President's Address – Catharina Gasser**

- The 3 main functions of the Parent's Association are to assist parents and students by supporting various activities, fundraising and establishing committees
- Future meetings in November, February, March, April, May (elections)
- No meetings in December (holidays), January (Executive meeting), June (Volunteer Appreciation)
- Start of the year has been busy with:
  - Class Rep Breakfast on September 21<sup>st</sup> arranged by Maria Hunt and Kym Grippo
  - Wine/Cheese for New Parents on September 29<sup>th</sup> with guest speaker Dr. Alex Sevigny, who received excellent feedback
  - "Spread the Net" walk-a-thon on September 30<sup>th</sup> where Louise White co-ordinated 20 parent volunteers
  - Homecoming on October 1<sup>st</sup> which was co-ordinated by Kim DelMedico; approximately forty parent volunteers helped out throughout the day
- Sandy Gray is looking for a parent volunteer to help out in the library. Tasks include reshelving, ordering, processing, and repairing books, as well as setting up the bulletin board and seasonal decorations. Ms. Gray can be reached at [gray@smcsmail.com](mailto:gray@smcsmail.com) or 416-653-3180 ext. 220
- Catharina is trying to secure a SMCS parent representative to help plan a day for the SMCS boys with "Habitat for Humanity," a non-profit organization that builds homes for those less fortunate; volunteers must be at least 16 years old (grade 11/12 students), donations of \$50 minimum are required from each participant, minimum of 20 participants; idea was supported by everyone present; date will be chosen later on as first term is very busy for grade 12 students, ideally it will take place on a PD day or a Saturday
- Louise White wished to let new parents in attendance know that these meetings were not a forum to discuss personal issues regarding teachers or their sons' academics

### **SMCS Principal's Report – Mr. Sheridan**

- Camp took place in September for grade 7 and 9 and grade 10 students
  - Main purpose is to build St. Mike's community, students are welcomed and mentored through the week by senior leaders (grade 12, 11 and some 10 students); the camp is outsourced to "Alive Outdoors"
  - Feedback on the camp has been outstanding; camp draws boys to St. Mike's
  - Some chaos back at school because teachers need to cover those at camp
  - New this year – senior leaders have lockers in the same rows as new students

- Home room visits have taken place
  - For younger grades - review meaning of SMCS crest which is embedded in the floor near the Main Office. Students walked around the floor; 3 different areas on each floor display “Goodness,” “Discipline,” and “Knowledge;” boys seemed to get more out of the discussion this way
  - For grade 11 and 12 boys – discussed their role as leaders co-curricularly and spiritually
- Spirit week, the last week of September, was a great week
  - Monday - Dress down day
  - Wednesday - Double Blue Jersey day
  - Thursday - Feast of St. Michael celebrated with all school mass for 1,050 boys standing and sitting in unison
  - Friday - Pep Rally followed by the walk-a-thon in support of “Spread the Net” which has raised \$15,000 to date
  - Saturday - Homecoming – great weather and record attendance
- Meet the Teacher and Curriculum Night on September 22<sup>nd</sup> was well attended
- First Class has been launched to parents/students; help is available internally
- Dr. Alex Seigny spoke about Social Media at the September 29<sup>th</sup> event
  - He says “yes” to social media, but parents need to get involved and set boundaries
  - He voiced his support for our school cell phone policy
- Pedagogy (strategies of teaching) – we are currently reviewing use of various tablets with 10 faculty members (blackberry, apple, etc.)
- Communication policy being drafted
  - When communicating with teachers: 1-2 sentences should be sent in an email. It is strongly recommended that any longer communication should require talking to or meeting with the teacher
- Class Rep Breakfast took place – 20 class representatives were in attendance
- Student presentations completed/planned
  - Grade 12 had a MADD presentation that was very powerful
  - Grade 7,8 Writer’s Craft Workshop with Shane Peacock, Canadian author
  - Dr. Andrew Feustel, Canadian NASA Astronaut will give 3 presentations on October 26<sup>th</sup> – grades 7,8,9, grades 10,11 and grade 12. Holy Name of Mary College School students will also be invited
- Dr. Michael Fullan, former dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of UofT, talked to department heads for one hour on his ideas on Leadership and school improvement (as studied throughout the world)
- CIS (Conference of Independent Schools of Ontario) sponsored a New Teacher Orientation Day
- Academic Awards Night takes place Wednesday October 5 (not Thursday which is Election Day)
- Hard copy calendars will go out to all families next year. They were not mailed out to all families this year in an effort to support First Class’s introduction and improve usage
- New staff: Mr. Luke Wilson (English), Mr. Peter Zavodny (Career Education, Religion, Mathematics), Mr. Angus Dineley (English), Mr. Adrian Spagnolo

(Science, Physical Education, Geography), Ms. Sandra Ann Lanigan (Learning Education Centre)

- Activities Fair for new students took place on September 14<sup>th</sup> – opportunity to meet the moderators and coaches of all the clubs, activities and sports at St. Mike’s and ask questions about the activity and what are commitments involved

### **SMCS President’s Report - Father Redican** (handout)

#### Marketing and Recruiting Assessment

- Offord Consultant Group was hired last spring to look at marketing and recruitment
- Enrolment has been in the same range (1,049 – 1,089) for some time but number of applications has been following off. Question: Where did the interest go?
- Study looked at marketing/recruiting and admissions process; gathered data through 25-30 interviews with parents, academic faculty, and administration
- Handout outlines mandate of study / key findings / recommendations /  
Fr. Redican responded with the following findings:
  - Study says enrolment is solid, but approach needs to be more proactive (and less passive), shifting program from “admissions” to “recruitment,” tracking students after they visit the school, make information clear on financial aid (reduce unnecessary applications by those who don’t qualify), work to eliminate the intimidation factor of the SSAT and better articulate the SMCS brand with regards to advertising:
    - Who were we? We were appealing to athletes in the past.
    - What are we? We want to be recognized for high academics, arts, music and athletics
  - We could expand AP program beyond a few selected courses, add drama to the arts program and improve athletics with less individual sports
  - Some changes as outlined, will happen quickly and over the longer term, the budget will be prepared to include more staffing
  - Website will be revamped with outside help. This is to be completed by year end

#### Boards of Directors meet on October 11<sup>th</sup>

- Consists of four Basilian Fathers who are not attached to the school, Father Timothy Scott, Father Mario D’Souza, Father William Irwin, Father Wilfrid Janisse,
- Superior General has dictated that the composition of the Board change in 2012
  - 3 Basilian Fathers with the introduction of two laypersons (cannot be current parents)
- Process to replace Father Redican will be clarified
- Questions asked about why St. Mike’s would not consider becoming an IB school
  - Fr. Redican explained that it is very prescriptive; there are so many requirements that participation in other activities would be compromised
  - The benefit of an AP program is that it is course by course; involves working with teachers to improve structure/delivery of classes and works

in the context of current activities offered; also ensures students are well prepared for university

- Reactions to the assessment/suggestions should be directed to F. Redican

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Fashion Show – November 16 – Deanna Biffis-Laikakos**

- Major fundraising event takes place on Wednesday November 16<sup>th</sup> at Riveriera Parque, starting at 6:00pm
- Event includes vendor tables, silent auction, 5 course dinner, fashion show, entertainment (including celebration of 50 year anniversary of the drama club), gifts bags – all for \$125 per person
- 343 tickets issued to date, 50 order forms in process
- First letter went out late in September. In October, a letter and email blast (also sent to Holy Name of Mary College School) will follow
- Tickets can be ordered online (which is secure) or requested through email
- Committee begins works in March

#### **Academic Committee – Luba Mycak**

- Committee works on projects to support the academic goals of the school
- 16 parents involved to date; first meeting is next Wednesday
- Committee updates the “University Application Guide” and welcomes feedback
- Committee also organizes the annual parent speaker program – currently looking for speakers re: “Coping with Teenage Stress”
- Another project involves creation of student activity profile – which should help students with resumes/university applications

#### **Treasurer’s Report – Gino Alberelli** (handout)

- Total current funds (carry forward from last year) as of September 30<sup>th</sup> are \$14,430 which includes \$8,657 unclaimed
- Budget of fixed expenses to be prepared for next meeting (approx. \$23-29K)
- Note that revenue from school fees is \$52,600 vs. \$21,420 in the previous year as family dues have increased from \$25 per family to \$50

#### **Budget – Kim DelMedico**

- Funding request letters for Teachers’ “Wish List” will be deposited in their mailboxes in October
- Due date for submitting “Wish List” requests is December 16<sup>th</sup> to Mr. Sheridan
- Requests to be reviewed in January by SMCSA Budget committee
- Approval of budget items to be present and ratified at February’s PA general meeting
- Maximum allotment for each request is \$2,500 (with some exceptions)

### **Communications – Janette Wong**

- Role is to liaison with Parent's Association and the school regarding communication, especially the website
- Met with Director of Communications (Michael De Pellegrin), IT Manager (Radu Ghitescu) and First Class vendor and put together a list of action items
- Browser version of First Class has problems and will be removed; downloading client is recommended
- Parents share logon ID, whereas students have unique ID's
- When one login's to First Class today you see lots of icons – some are disabled and display an error message when you click on them. They will go away in the future
- The icons that you should use:
  - Calendars – currently three sites; one hard copy; one on First Class which displays both school year and co-curricular; one calendar appears on external website has less information and is promotional only
  - Parent Association Information – includes agenda/minutes from SMCSA meetings, university application guide, cafeteria menu, etc.
  - Videos, brochures – to be updated
- Longer term – subcalenders will be added, extraneous icons will be removed, guidelines for posting to the calendar will be added, information on clubs/activities will be added
- Teachers post homework/assign due dates to the website; some courses are found under the subject vs. classroom
- MYSMCS is not integrated with First Class; when you update your profile in MYSMCS it is a manual synchronization to others databases maintained by the school
- For issues with First Class parents may contact Mr. Michael De Pellegrin and students can contact Mr. David Lee (i.e. for password resets)

### **Interguild – Louise White**

- Interguild is a Parents' Association Network for Independent Schools in Ontario representing approximately 44 schools; the purpose is to foster communication and facilitate the sharing of ideas and information (i.e. how they fundraise)
- First event was a Presidents' Breakfast held on September 20<sup>th</sup> at St. Andrews College. The discussion included:
  - How schools are appreciating teachers? (lunch/breakfast funded by PA)
  - Communication was a key issue (Twitter, Facebook)
- Contact Louise White or Catharina Gasser if you would like to attend other events

### **Social Committee – Darlene Emeny**

- Meet the New Parents' Wine/Cheese Thursday September 29<sup>th</sup>
  - 200 attendees

- Thanks to the Pellicione Family who once again graciously donated food for this event
- Grade 9 Mother/Son Brunch – Sunday February 5<sup>th</sup>
  - Mass / hot brunch will be served

### **Arts Committee – Lucy Tatangelo**

- Volunteers are needed for the following upcoming events:
  - Christmas Concerts – November 30<sup>th</sup>, December 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Spring Musical – April 18-21
  - Club Blue Note – May 4<sup>th</sup> – jazz club performances, art display
  - Spring Concerts – May 9<sup>th</sup>, May 10<sup>th</sup>

### **Nutrition Committee – Julie Sartori**

- Committee meets 2-3 times per year; next meeting is October 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:45pm
- Opportunity to provide recommendations for what the boys eat; looking for healthy choices, less processed foods
- Jimmy Selema is the new Food Service Supervisor
- Jean Paul, the cook, may be retiring soon
- Joanne Parent will be mentored for Chairperson by Julie Sartori this year

### **Homecoming – October 1<sup>st</sup> – Kim DelMedico**

- Staff from Aramark (Jimmy/Jean Paul) and all the volunteers were outstanding
- Sold out of everything due to the high turnout
- All three SMCS teams won that day

### **Other**

- Rocco Sebastiano, co-ordinator for student Guest Speaker series is asking for suggestions for this upcoming year
- Question was raised as to why some club activities couldn't start later in the day – Mr. Sheridan's response was that after school programs are designed so that the students invest quality time (i.e. are involved in one after school event at a time) and don't over extend themselves

Father Redican closed the meeting with a prayer.

Next meeting to be held **Tuesday, November 1, 2011** in the Odette Library.