

GREENWICH
CATHOLIC SCHOOL



PA Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2019

Meeting called to order: 8:45 am

Opening Prayer:

February is the Month of the Holy Family:

Loving God, in the Spirit of the Holy Family, we ask for Your blessings on all families. Let Mary's openness to your wondrous ways be an inspiration to place all trust in You. Let Joseph's courage provide hope during times of anxiety and uncertainty. Let Jesus' life ignite all families with a spirit of light and love.

May the grace that encircled the Holy Family widen to embrace all families. For this we pray. Amen.

Our Mission:

Greenwich Catholic School provides students with a life-long intellectual and spiritual foundation through a rigorous and innovative curriculum focused on faith, critical thinking, responsibility and service.

Our Motto:

ROOTED IN FAITH - SURROUNDED BY COMMUNITY - COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

Approve minutes of the January meeting: 1st: Kat Blanding 2nd: Kim Higgs

PA Board Members: Nicole Hartman, Maria Elena Gaztambide, Magda Chrostowski, Meg DeCaro, Susan McKee

Excused Members: Christine Keene

PA Members: Jen Koenigsberger, Raul Perez, Maura Lynn, Alexis Paksi, Jennifer LaPietra, Kim Higgs, Janine Corticelli, Sarah Gengo, Brigid Futch, Nina Balestrieri, Diane Mannello, Jason Drexel, Tatiana Quesada, Matt Hershey, Meg Caraher, MaryBeth Brown, Keith Merriman, Marie Rocha, Tricia Caputo, Jan Montana, Megan McHugh, Audrey Sepulveda, Kat Blanding, Donna Malusis, Elaine Guiffreda, Stacy Mack, Andrea Kopilak, Kim Garcia, Trip Curtis, Ania Edward, Laurie Schick, Kristen Galvin, Tami Allen, Christa Smullin

Correspondence: Mrs. Fata

Important Dates:

Feb 8th	First Friday Mass, 10am, Full Dress
Feb 11th-18th	No School - Winter Break
Feb 19th	1st Grade Mass, 9am
Feb 20th	2nd Grade Mass, 9am
Feb 21st	4th Grade Mass, 9am
Feb 22nd	Kindergarten Mass, 9am
Feb 26th	Spring Afters Registration Begins
Mar 1st	First Friday Mass, 10am, Full Dress Noon Dismissal (Aftercare until 3pm)
Mar 6th	Ash Wednesday (PA Meeting Date Change)
Mar 8th	5th Grade Mass, 9am
Mar 12th	Workshop, Scott Driscoll from Internet Safety Concepts, Grades 5-8 Parent Workshop, 7pm
Mar 12-26th	IOWA Testing, Grades 1-7
Mar 13th	PA Meeting, 8:45am, Cafeteria
Mar 15th	3rd Grade Mass, 9am Family BINGO Night, 6:30pm, Gym
Mar 19th	1st Grade Mass, 9am
Mar 20th	2nd Grade Mass, 9am
Mar 21st	4th Grade Mass, 9am Lower School Science Fair
Mar 22nd	Kindergarten Mass, 9am
Mar 24th	Greenwich St. Patrick's Day Parade
Mar 26th	Third Quarter Ends
Mar 28th	GCS Together in Kindness: A Day of Service

President's Report:

Catholic Schools Week - Thanks to everyone who helped make Catholic Schools week a wonderful celebration at GCS. We had so many reasons to be proud - the concert, vocational visit, team jersey day, teacher luncheon, and the STREAMS Fair for the Upper School all helped us showcase what makes our school so special. A huge thank you to our Faculty Liaison Committee Chairs, Nina Balestriere & Diane Mannello, for hosting a fabulous Teacher Luncheon last Thursday. Everyone loved the food which was from a new Italian place in Cos Cob, Pastaficio. The Convent looked great and it was fun to see the teachers in their team jerseys! They were all gifted with a Dunkin Donuts gift card and each table had a lottery ticket. Also, thank you to our Room Parents and Classroom Volunteers for helping with the classroom coverage.

Back To Basics: For those of you who couldn't make it to the Back To Basics Benefit last Saturday night, it was such a fabulous night! The gym was transformed into a winter wonderland, it was beautiful! There was wine tasting, delicious food, dancing, even a caricature artist, and so many amazing items to bid on. A HUGE thank you to the Back to

Basics Chairs, Elaine Guiffreda & Marie Rocha, who worked so hard at making the night possible. They will be giving a report later in the meeting.

PA Positions: The current PA Board positions that are up for renewal are Secretary and Treasurer. You will be receiving an email from the Nominating Committee soon with a letter outlining the process if you wish to run. So please take a look and let us know if you have any questions. We encourage you to give it a chance if you are interested in getting more involved and supporting this wonderful school.

Also, Committee Chairs - please let us know your intentions for next year. If anyone has an interest in chairing a committee or special event, please let one of us know. Or if you're not sure, just let us know your interests and how much time you have available and we can help you find something you would enjoy doing.

2nd Lice Check: We had our second lice check and there were zero cases!

VP Report:

Maria Elena discussed parking lot safety. A letter was sent home regarding an incident that occurred in the parking lot last week. The letter was sent home through the backpacks in the lower school. In the upper school, the letter was mailed home. She said that this should serve as a reminder that we need to be mindful of the safety procedures in the parking lot. We need everyone helping to remind people if they are doing it wrong. A question was asked about whether the swim school will modify the schedule. The administration is talking to the swim school about whether there will be lessons at that time going forward. Pierangelo Corticelli reminded everyone that security is everyone's responsibility. If you see something, you have to call the police. A suggestion was made that we put cameras in the parking lot. The parking lot will be redone when the church is renovated. Another parent suggested that lights be added to the parking lot as well.

Magda introduced Tatiana Quesada as the new Box Top Chair. There will be new box outside the cafeteria, right next to the prayer box where Children can bring in their box tops. The grade that donates the most box tops will win a prize.

Old Business:

Back-To-Basics Benefit - Elaine thanked everyone who came to the event and donated online. They had more donations than ever. She also thanked everyone for attending the meetings. Marie and Elaine asked if anyone would be interested in running Back to Basics going forward. They are still working on the numbers because there is still money coming in. They will have an update on the amount raised in the next meeting.

New Business:

Faith-Service-Outreach - Kim and Andrea discussed GCS Together in Kindness, Sharing Christ's Love One Heart at a Time. They are excited to bring it to the school. They wanted the school to come together and make a difference. As a community, we can spread kindness and help others in need. They want to engage the kids in thoughtful activities that are

meaningful. The Malta House is a special place and is the perfect recipient for this day of service. It is a 10-bed house for expectant mothers and new mothers. They spend time there and receive education and job training and then they are able to move out. They need many items for a new home as well as basic survival needs, things to provide a healthy environment, as well as spiritual items. The FSO committee came up with a list of crafts and activities for the service day. They will be assembling diaper bags, make baby blankets, make journals for the Moms, and have the kids write cards of encouragement. They have met with the teachers and administrations to make sure it will work for all of the children. They mentioned they will need parent volunteers to help. The service day will be March 28th and the students will come in period by period and do their activities. The last period will be a prayer service with Father Ian. There will be a day after school before the event where the upper school kids can come help with some extra activities and receive community service hours. The Virtue of the Month in March is Mercy, which lines up with the mission of this activity. They have set up two Amazon wish lists, one for diaper bag items, and one for the Moms. People can also donate grocery gift cards. Donations can be left in the front office in an envelope marked FSO. There were also some Giving Tree donation opportunities at the Back to Basics event. They passed around a sign up for volunteers.

Stacy Mack – Stacy has been on a campaign to get more physical activity in the school day. She met with Mrs. Kopas and they agreed to try to improve things at recess. In order to do this, they need to get more hands-on deck to help. She is asking for people to help between 11:30am-1:30pm every day during the week. Safety and privacy is taken very seriously and volunteers will be trained by Mrs. Kopas about what is needed and not needed. More on information will be coming around in Previews. She passed around a sign up as well.

Teacher Lounge Snacks - We are looking for volunteers to help stock the teacher's lounge with snacks each month. It's something they really appreciate! We have a sign-up sheet coming around. Jackie Brew will be the point person for this effort.

Bingo – Nicole discussed the upcoming Bingo event. Please save the date for this year's Family Bingo Night on **Friday, March 15th** at 6:30pm in the Gym. The Bingo committee is looking for new/unused toys, gift cards, books, games and any items that would be suitable for Bingo prizes valued \$5 and up. They need prizes that are suitable for all ages (even grown ups). Gift baskets for their raffle or items that can be put together in a basket are also greatly appreciated. You can provide the items and they are happy to assemble them. Please contact the Bingo Chairs MaryRose Driscoll, Sue Robinson or MaryBeth Brown if you have items to donate OR leave them in the front office and make sure to label them "Bingo Prize". There will be more information to come in the following weeks. Ticket Sales open after Winter Break.

St. Patrick's Day Parade - Nicole also discussed The Greenwich St. Patrick's Day Parade which will be down Greenwich Avenue will be Sunday, March 24th at 2:00pm. Everyone is invited and it's a lot of fun...the kids love it! Monsignor Cullen will be the Grand Marshal of this year's parade so we were hoping to get a big group together and march to represent GCS. The parade is also hosting an Installation Dinner on Saturday March 2nd at Redmen's Hall on East Elm Street with a reception at 6pm and dinner at 7pm. Tickets can be purchased for this dinner if you wish to attend. More information will be sent out via eNews.

Father Daughter Dance – Nicole asked everyone to please save the date for this year’s Father Daughter dance on Friday, April 5th at 7pm in the Gym.

Spring Musical – Nicole asked everyone to please save the date for the GCS Spring Musical: May 3rd - 5th. This year’s play will be Seussical.

Spring Book Fair – Nicole mentioned the date change for the Spring Book Fair. With the School Play needing the gym for storage, the date has been changed. The Book Fair will now be held May 14-17th. Monday, May 13th will be the set-up day because Sunday the 12th is Mother’s Day.

Principal’s Report:

Mrs. Kopas thanked the Back to Basics chairs for all of their hard work. She discussed her conversation with Stacy Mack about the physical activity in school. She said the more hands that we have, the more options we have to get the kids moving. It is very important for the kids. She discussed the room parent role and how maybe next year we can start to think of them as cheerleaders for the school versus organizers. She thinks this will encourage more school spirit and increased participation. She said the way to make people feel welcome at the school is important. She also discussed the St. Patrick Day dinner. She purchased 4 tickets for the school faculty to attend. She said she would like as many people to attend as possible as a big thank you to Monsignor Cullen for all that he has done for the school.

She also discussed social media in the Middle School. She said that kid’s personalities are different in school as compared to their social media’s account. Scott Driscoll is coming to the school to talk to the kids and parents about Internet Safety. Mrs. Kopas and Mr. Radzin came up with an idea called “Get Even”. At Mass this Friday, she is going to tell them to practice being kind online. If you want to say something mean online, say something kind instead. Or if someone says something mean to you, respond by saying something nice. She is also going to ask the kids to try to stay off social media during the week we are off. When she used to teach, she used to challenge the students to stay off TV. She used to extend this to be during Lent and she found some kids gave up TV for the entire time. She would like to try to do the same thing for Lent with Social Media.

Tonight, in Rye, there is a book signing and a talk by Denise Clark Pope who is an author who wrote a book called “Doing School – How We Are Creating a Generation of Stressed Out Materialistic, and Medicated Students”. The last week in February, Lisa Riegel will be at the school all week and she hopes to hold another parent meeting.

A question was asked if the doorbell can ring in the Upper School after hours. She said we can’t keep someone in the front office after 5pm and the teachers that are in the upper school are doing their work or working with students and can’t answer the door. Children shouldn’t be on campus or in the buildings after school without parent supervision.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:06am