

School Committee Minutes
Immaculate Heart of Mary School
August 16, 2018
East-West Room

Call to Order: Chair Matt Crockett, at 6:30 pm.

Attendance: Fr. John Byers, Michelle Corey, Matt Crockett, Emily Crockett (PTO), Bill Drake, Lisa Galbraith, Karen Hicks, Kelly Johnston, Danielle Martin, Mario Medina, and Francisco Romero.

Unable to attend: Rick Artibee, Rose McBrearty, Kizito Ssemakula, Colette Scrimger, and Mary Margaret Utess, all with notice.

◆ All joined in the **opening verse-and-prayer**, and Matt read our **Mission Statement**.

◆ **Pastor's Comments** – **Father John Byers** began his remarks by providing background information about the very recent appointment of **Karen Hicks** as the interim principal of our school. That action followed former principal **Angela Johnston's** late summer decision to accept a principal position that would bring her closer to her family. Father indicated he knew how difficult the decision was for Angela, and he ultimately supported her decision.

Following their meeting, Father consulted with several people about securing an interim principal, including diocesan leadership and our school's Teaching Team. Karen Hicks' name surfaced. An interview followed. With her extensive experience as an educator and her familiarity with our staff and many parents (because of her Special Ed work in the school last year), she was hired for the interim position. Living in Ashley, MI., north of St. Johns, she worked 28 years in the Lansing School District with an emphasis in the area of Special Ed. As her students continued to progress in that area, Karen moved from the classroom and into more of a Special Ed consulting role. She ultimately began working with interns in that area at Michigan State and was subsequently recruited by Angela Johnson last fall when the need for such support was identified at our school.

(Before moving forward, Father John did want to address the recent departure of **Joel Hoffman** from his grade-three position at our school. Fr. John emphasized Joel had not been seeking other employment, but that he had been recruited again by a long-time buddy on behalf of St. Joseph's Catholic School in St. Johns. This time around Joel finally relented, allowing him to teach very close to his home--and--family.)

Karen then thanked Father John and proceeded to **introduce herself to the Committee**.
(Ed. Note, per August 20th School Bulletin mailing -)

*“As you all know there have been some changes at Immaculate Heart of Mary School for the coming school year. First, let me introduce myself. My name is **Karen Hicks** and I will be the interim principal while a committee is formed to begin the search for a new principal. My background is in special education, teaching for 28 years in basic classrooms, resource rooms, and general education classrooms. When my students began exceeding academic expectations, I was asked to become a Teacher Consultant to work with classroom teachers. In this role, I worked closely with teachers to develop lessons*

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that met the needs of all students. This role then led me to a Supervisor role, which offered me the opportunity to monitor services in 23 classrooms, as well as to work closely with parents and families as they navigated the educational system for their children.

Finally, last school year I began working at Immaculate Heart of Mary School as an interventionist. Last school year, I also worked at Michigan State University as a Field Instructor in the Special Education Internship program, as well as teaching two literacy courses to both undergraduates and graduate students."

- Karen will work full-time at our school Monday-thru-Wednesday and for part of each Thursday morning. The other day-and-a-half will have to continue being at Michigan State working with Special Ed interns.

- ◆ **"Just Letting You Know"** – Karen provided more information on items that appeared in her report which was mailed to the Committee last week. ** The review of last Spring's NWEA test results will occur at the August 20 Opening Team Meeting. Karen cited that the review between May 2017 results and those from this May 2018 showed an "upward" trend in test results, but not at the rate our school strives for. Greater emphasis will continue to be placed on student achievement this coming year. **Karen also indicated the success of our Teaching Team on pulling together more than the Diocesan-required data for the newly mandated Science SMART Goals for this year. Our school is clearly ahead of the curve in this area.

- **Members' Roundtable** – Several questions, comments, and observations arose throughout the meeting. In no particular order, these included:
 - Danielle asked "if everything that was already in-place for this year" would still **continue to be the same**. In simplest terms, Karen Hicks indicated it would be.
 - Michelle suggested that Karen could send out an Email listing exactly **which Teaching Team members will be teaching which grade-levels and which subjects**. Karen will strive to get that done before Visit Day.
 - To that end, Mario cited that the primary task now is **to make the students (and the parents) feel more comfortable** in light of all the changes that have occurred this summer.
 - Karen agreed with that, and she also indicated her intent to host monthly bagels-and-a-beverage (sic) **get-togethers with parents**. (Nothing formal, but a time to provide information and to exchange ideas.)
 - Danielle indicated some of the school moms have been meeting Wednesday mornings after Mass, for a few months, to keep each other apprised of school happenings and to offer support "about family things." She said it has been working out well.
 - Michelle asked **'how long the "Interim" (principal) period will last.'** Father John stated that it will be difficult to attract a viable group of candidates at the beginning of the school year. He stated that he will consult with the diocese to determine the timing and establish a search plan that doesn't disrupt the school year or tempt someone to leave their position during the year. He felt it would be reasonable to expect the **'interim' period** would continue until **the end of this school year**. A search team will be formed once we establish a timetable.
 - Danielle asked, **"What about The Gym? Is it still going to happen?"** Father John answered (emphatically), **"Yes"** and went on to spell out there are two more meetings with the Diocese scheduled for late August. Father indicated the process has been challenged by the General Contractor experiencing difficulty getting sub-contractors. Everyone in town is having trouble getting enough skilled-trade and even general laborers. Father expects construction to begin

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Roundtable, Cont. – in the fall with completion by June 2019. He further noted that plans are to convert the ‘grassy knoll’ behind the Student Center into a new parking lot, affording more parking spaces than what now exists in the north parking area.

- Kelly asked what the **current enrollment** is. Father John indicated we are at **173**. (Of note, the balanced budget presented to the Committee in April was formulated with a base enrollment of 177. Returning Sign-Up at that time was 169, with the expectation of gaining eight more enrollments by Opening in August. Four of those have materialized so far. Prayers continue.)
- ◆ The **May 8th Minutes** had been mailed earlier and Matt asked for any changes. There were none, and the minutes were approved by consent.
- **PTO Information** – The **PTO executive board** met with Karen Hicks just prior to the School Committee meeting and reviewed plans for this school year. New PTO officers, all new to their positions, are president Emily Crockett, vice president Alli Wilcox, Bridget Walsh (secretary), and Kim Drake Morehouse (treasurer).
- **Announcements** – This year’s completed **School Committee Roster** will be mailed out this week.
- **Petitions and Closing Prayer** - Our group joined in the Hail Mary for IHM Deacon Bill Fudge; for Nancy Murphy and for Nancy’s mom; for a more-successful returning enrollment at our school; for **‘our School Family and the Teaching Team’**; and for all other special intentions.

ADJOURNMENT – Matt adjourned the meeting at 7:21 pm.

<u>Next Meeting:</u>	Date:	Wednesday, September 12, 2018
	Location:	IHM East-West Room
	Time:	6:30pm
	Prayer:	All Pray the Opening Prayers
	Mission Statement:	Chair Matt Crockett

Future School Committee Meeting Dates (All Subject to Change)–
October 17; November 14; January 9; February 13;
March 13; April 10; May 8

Edited and Submitted by Bill Drake, Secretary to the School Committee

“Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School challenges students to discover God’s gifts spiritually, intellectually, socially and physically within a community that nurtures, honors and respects the unique person.”