

MINUTES

ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL PLANNING MEETING

AUGUST 26, 2008

Sister Mary Michael C. K. and Father Borowiak met Tuesday, August 26, 2008 to begin planning the new Saint Michael Catholic School. Both Fr. Borowiak and Sister Mary Michael said that the planning for St. Michael School will be a process and that discussion and ideas will evolve and develop many times before final conclusions are reached.

Sister Mary Michael has been a professed member of the School Sisters of Christ the King since 1987. She was principal of St. Peter School two years after it opened and served there through the school's tenth year (1991-2000). She is currently the vocation directress for the School Sisters.

Discussion began with the need/desire for a mission statement for St. Michael School. Sister Mary Michael said she will get mission statements from other Catholic schools staffed by the School Sisters. Those schools include: St. Teresa, St. Peter and St. Joseph, all in Lincoln and St. James in Crete and St. Vincent de Paul in Seward.

Sister Mary Michael suggested that all parishioners be kept informed of all planning meetings by posting the minutes of each meeting on the parish web site and sending them out by email.

A Vision statement and core values statement for St. Michael School were discussed. Sr. Mary Michael said these would arise from a mission statement.

Discussion turned to key principles which should guide the planning of Saint Michael School.

Beginning principles are: (these are not exhaustive or necessarily in order of importance).

1. Empowering faculty and staff with the resources and facilities necessary to achieve excellence in the Catholic faith, academics, life skills, family, and extra curricular activities within a solid, faithful, Catholic environment.
2. Be transparent in accountability and disclosure in the planning process. Keep parishioners informed of and involved in every step of the process and to invite and encourage parishioner involvement in the planning process.
3. Provide resources to provide a state-of-the-art educational environment – to identify and utilize the most recent developments and innovations in technology in the delivery of information – not to the exclusion of classical, tried educational norms and practices- that will give the students to tools to strive for excellence in their individual lives, their families, their Catholic faith and in the classroom.
4. Create strong parental involvement in the planning process.
5. Invite total parish commitment to Catholic School education.

Discussion then turned to the staffing of Saint Michael School. In a desire for a quality education, Father Borowiak said he would like to find the best and brightest teachers for Saint Michael School. He said recent college graduates would be up-to-date on the most recent developments in education and the use of technology in the delivery of information in the classroom. Sister Mary Michael said there are pros and cons in hiring first time teachers, Experience, life commitments and other factors might be significant in hiring recent graduates.

Father Borowiak raised the possibility of contacting Midwest Catholic colleges and universities and asking them if they would be open to creating a partnership with Saint Michael parish. The idea of a partnership would be to identify and establish a relationship with students while still in college in an effort to hire the best teachers for St. Michael School. Father Borowiak asked if such a partnership would include incentives to bring teachers to St. Michael School. He asked about incentives including tuition assistance or debt reduction. Father Borowiak also asked if a teaching order of Sisters cannot be found, could a house be constructed on parish grounds that could serve as a convent or as an incentive/partial compensation for St. Michael teachers.

Father Borowiak and Sister Mary Michael talked about many Catholic colleges and universities in the Midwest. Father Borowiak said he believes graduates of a Midwest college would be more apt to locate and teach in the Midwest. Sister Mary Michael suggested that the parish approach Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. Benedictine College is located about an hour south of Falls City, Ne. (include web site). The School Sisters of Christ the King and many students from Nebraska attend Benedictine College. Benedictine is known for its academic regimen and its faithfulness to Church teaching.

Sister Mary Michael said she will be visiting Benedictine College September 8-9. Father Borowiak asked her to visit with the dean of the Teacher's College there and ask about the possibility of a partnership with Benedictine College and the students in the Teacher's College. Father Borowiak said he would like to find the best and brightest students and partner with them while they are still in college as possible future teachers in Saint Michael School.

Father Borowiak and Sister Mary Michael concluded their first meeting by agreeing to study web sites of other Catholic and public universities to see what a partnership such as this would entail.