

Minutes  
Parent Organization Meeting  
Oct. 7, 2009

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:20 pm by Linda Gast, President.

Linda briefly described the mission of the Parent Organization and recognized this year's officers and chairs of committees/events:

President – Linda Gast

Vice Presidents – Mary Baugher

--Javier Perez

Treasurer – Cookie Matthews

Secretary - Janice Partenheimer

Publicity Chair – Cathy Hall

Spaghetti Dinner Chair – Tom Dickey

Open House Reception Chair – Valerie Toyer

Father-Daughter Dance Chair – Agnes Cheung

Baccalaureate Reception Chair – to be confirmed

Linda especially thanked Mr. Tom Dickey for his leadership of the Spaghetti Dinner held on Sat., Oct. 3. She announced that because of the success of the Spaghetti Dinner with proceeds of almost \$700 after expenses, the Parents Organization has already realized this year's goal to fund a new student scholarship in the amount of \$500. Linda recognized all volunteers who helped with the Spaghetti Dinner and thanked them for making the scholarship a reality. She is even hopeful that we might be able to award 2 scholarships this year.

Linda stated that another goal this year for the Parents Organization is to work closely with the new Seton President, Sr. Ellen Marie Hagar, the Seton Principal, Mrs. Sharon Pasterick, and other key administrators as they work toward their 5-year Strategic Plan. She announced that there would be several opportunities for parents to become involved in school committees being formed by Sr. Ellen Marie to address areas in which she would like input. The current list of committees includes:

Technology

Building and Facilities

Strategic Planning

Sr. Ellen Marie is also holding focus groups with parents, with which Linda will be assisting. The dates for upcoming focus groups will be November 2, 10 and 19 at 7 PM at Seton (location TBD). Focus Group questions will be available so that if parents cannot make meetings, they can send feedback to Sr. Ellen Marie via email or in writing.

Parents were reminded of additional important dates:

17 October Service to Seton Day 9-2 for parents to come to Seton to help with various activities such as painting, planting, minor repairs, etc. Parents can come for any length of time and as their schedules permit. Bring your work tools, cleaning gloves!

4 November is the next Parent Organization meeting.

7 February is the Father-Daughter Dance

Linda thanked Cathy Hall for the development of the save-the-date bookmarks and reminded parents to pick up a copy if they had not done so. Linda thanked everyone for attending the meeting and hoped we would have more meetings with such attendance. She reminded all the attendees that the Parent Organization meetings were the first Wednesday of every month except January. Linda is working to have a special speaker for the December meeting.

Linda then turned the meeting over to Mrs. Sharon Pasterick, Principal.

#### Principal's Report

Mrs. Pasterick talked about the matching grant from the State of Maryland of \$50,000 to be used for track and field improvements. The grant requires Seton to raise \$25,000. She asked how many parents attended "Back to School Night". She relayed that they had not decided until that night to request money from the parents for what they are calling the "Field of Dreams" campaign. On that night and with the additional funds from the faculty, so far half of the money has been raised for Seton's matching portion. She thanks everyone for their support and encouraged parents who can and have not yet donated to please consider supporting this effort that will benefit all Seton students, not just student athletes.

Mrs. Pasterick then turned the meeting over to Sister Ellen Marie Hagar.

#### President's Report

Sister Ellen Marie stated that she was glad to have the opportunity to speak to the parents for more than a few minutes. She has been attending the Senior Encounter retreat for the last three days and commended the parents of seniors for their wonderful daughters, who were doing well in leading prayers.

Sister stated that they have been working out the kinks on the new web page and parent announcements. She wanted to apologize for all the announcements and stated that they were going to institute a new procedure where the Parent Announcements would be going out on Wednesday of each week. Only emergency announcements would be distributed any other time. The announcements on Wednesday would have all the information for the coming week.

Sister Ellen Marie provided a brief explanation of the duties of the Principal and the President of Seton because many people have asked this question. The Principal is responsible for anything pertaining to the education of the students and the daily operations of the school. The President is responsible for the financial health of the school.

She then turned to her presentation for the evening which included the following points:

Welcome

Welcome to all the parents

Income Sources

Over 90% of the income for the school comes from the parents. The school has no endowments.

Total Income 2008 \$7,220,140

Tuition Assistance: \$386,750 (approximately the same amount as is generated by Development)

Additional Expenses \$6,669,138

Currently, Sister Dorothy is the only administrative support person handling all tuition payments and related matters. Sister Dorothy needs assistance and it is not good planning for the school to rely solely upon one individual to manage all of its funds.

Thus, Seton currently needs to address the longer term financial solvency and provide for a more diversified revenue stream, including endowments, grants, alumni giving and other income sources that do not solely rely on parents. She also wants to “front-load” the revenue stream with tuition payments, provide a consistent and systematic payment method, maintain affordable tuition, and provide a payment schedule that assists parents.

At this point, the senior parents were released to the library to discuss college applications and information while the rest of the parents remained for a discussion on the new FACTS system.

FACTS System

The FACTS system will be implemented for the 2010-2011 school year. Parents who wish to pay full tuition in one or two installments will submit their payments directly to the school/Sr. Dorothy. Parents electing to use FACTS will have the option of paying monthly or bi-weekly. There is a \$41 one-time registration for parents to set up a FACTS account. FACTS parents will begin payments for the 2010-2011 school year in June and July. Then in August parents will pay fees, books, uniforms and supplies; NO tuition payments will be collected. Then FACTS payments will resume for the months of September 2010-April 2011.

Sr. Ellen Marie alerted parents who wish to apply for financial assistance must 1) complete the Archdiocese application for financial aid and 2) must do so by December 4, 2009. She noted that these applications will be coming online soon. Although Seton has its own tuition assistance program, you must complete the Archdiocese financial aid application in order to be considered for assistance.

### Senior Parents

Ms. Vanessa Cooke spoke to the parents on behalf of Mrs. Kristin Rundell. Kristin is the senior's guidance counselor but she is on maternity leave. She will be back the middle of November. Vanessa started by reminding all the parents that each student is given 3 excused absences for college visits. But she did warn that they should not be taking those absences when they have a paper due or a test scheduled. If you are applying online to a college or university, when the application is completed, there will be a page which states the application has been accepted. The parent or student needs to print that page and bring it to the guidance office for the office to send the rest of the paperwork. Whether you applied online or through the guidance office, parent/student should check the status of the application online frequently. Once the application has been accepted, the processing starts and most schools put you on an e-mail rotation to let you know what has been completed and what is still missing. Do not get excited - it takes a while for all the processing to take place. Once all the paperwork has been put into the college/university system, your name will be taken off the e-mail rotation. If you are still getting e-mails for over three weeks, contact the guidance office with the latest information from the college/university and they will address what is missing.

Make sure you work with your daughters to identify all the information to be sent to the college/university. Some schools do not need the SAT scores for evaluation but do need them for scholarship evaluation. Need to understand the requirements of the school. Also, note that if you get the scores from the College Board it will cost you \$22 for each request. Most schools are only looking at the Critical Reading and Math scores.

Vanessa provided some dates for the parents. University of Maryland College Park requires admission requests by 1 November, so the guidance office requires the student's paperwork two weeks prior. October 24 and December 5 are the SAT testing dates. December 12 is the ACT testing date. Financial Aid workshop is December 10.

There are 139 graduating seniors. This is a stressful time for them. Their classes are hard and demanding. Their other activities take time. When they say they are stressed and tired --- believe them. Be patient with them and monitor how/what they are doing.

### Tuition Drawing

Linda Gast announced the first tuition remission drawing. Drawings will be held at each Parent Organization meeting this year. All parents in attendance were eligible for a \$200 deduction from their tuition for this year. Cookie Matthews, Treasurer, drew the name of Reaver Clements, parent of Ashley Clements. Congratulations to the Clements!

Linda Gast adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:15 pm. A meeting of the Athletic Boosters followed.