

## **ABVM Family Questions 1-25-12 to 2-1-12**

Q- Who will comprise the Home & School Board? What will their duties be? Will there be a fundraising committee?

***A- The parents of Cardinal Foley will most likely select officers of the H&S. This entity will be separate from the School Advisory Board, which comprises a cross-section of various parishioners and advises the pastors on the operation and planning for the school. The Advisory Board members are appointed by the pastors and already are working on a myriad of issues concerning the new school.***

Q- At Annunciation, Father Haynes set certain goals for the H&S Board to raise each year, GREAT idea for point of reference and planning purposes, probably the reason that Annunciation is/was in a good financial situation. Where and how will funds be spent? Who will be taking care of St. Denis' debt? I hate to ask about the 'white elephant in the room', but I do not want to be responsible for past issues...I want a clean slate. How can I be sure that if I contribute to a fundraiser or take part in one that it will go ONLY to Cardinal Foley School?

***A- Cardinal Foley is a new entity and starting with a clean slate. Fundraising specifically slated for Cardinal Foley will need to happen. Those funds raised will be used for Cardinal Foley School. The debt of St. Denis parish is the responsibility of St. Denis parish, not Cardinal Foley School. Fundraisers will be clearly stated that they are for Cardinal Foley School.***

Q- I do believe that this issue has been raised to a certain extent, however I do not feel that there are definite answers. Could you please let me know if there is a class maximum size for HONORS MATH? My older children have benefitted from a class size of 7-10, I believe that this aids in the continued success that Mrs. Giordano has in stretching each student and knowing their strengths and areas that could use improvement and attention. I would like to know the proposed class-sizes for the current/incoming grades. This is a major issue for our family and although our letter of intent was sent, this needs attention as soon as possible.

***A- The discussion about curriculum and classes such as honors math are still in progress. We realize there are a number of things that need attention and we are doing the best we can to address the issues and provide answers to families.***

Q- First, thanks to all the team members for their hard work and dedication to Catholic education. We have a question that we raised at the ABVM Focus Group that we attended. Would it be possible to include all fees (lunch, activity, stationery, etc.) into the tuition amount? It is difficult when given an amount for tuition, but then when school starts we are hit with additional fees. If all fees were included they could just be deducted from the FACTS program.

***A- That is a something we can investigate with FACTS and let parents know what options can be made available for the payment of the fees you mentioned. We see FACTS as great way to assist parents in keeping track of fees and having an easy option to pay them.***

A- I see that a parents' committee was formed to aid in the selection of the new uniforms. In the future, could the formation of a group like this be made available to all interested parents? Finding out after the fact that a group has been formed can leave some parents feeling left out of the process.

***A- The board thought it would be wise to have Mike Finnegan and Walt Kokol from St. Denis find four Mom's from each parish school to help narrow down the choices for uniform options. We realize that it is referred to as a committee, but our only thought was to make sure we could narrow down uniform options to a reasonable amount. In the near future there will be a get together where parents will be able to vote on the uniform they like the best. As mentioned before, with some of the decisions that need to be made, time is of the essence. We in no way were trying to exclude anyone and in the end every interested parent will have a say in picking the school uniform. We***

***thought it would be more productive to find 8 reasonable people to sit down, talk things out, and narrow down the number of uniforms choices so parents can have clear choices. Flynn and O'Hara had many choices and some were very similar. The rep suggested that in her experience it is best to have the choices narrowed down for parents to ultimately pick. We are doing the best we can but we also don't have the luxury of hindsight. We also realize that with probably every decision we make, some people will be unhappy with it no matter what. But we still need to make decisions. All I can say is we truly are trying to do things in the best interest of the children, families, and Cardinal Foley School. I wish I could say that everything we decide, or do, or say will make everyone happy, but unfortunately that will not be the case and we understand that. We know that there will be many opportunities for parents to step up and be a part of a committee or volunteer to help with all that we are doing. When those opportunities arrive we will be sure to allow interested parents to step up.***

Comment- I know this is a lot but this right now is the only way for us to have any input and/or communication about the new school.

***We feel that right now this is the best way to make sure every parent has a chance to be heard and give their input. We are glad that we get the opportunity to see what parent questions and concerns are. The short/direct questions are very much appreciated.***

Q. Is the Parish still required to subsidize the new school, both campuses? And if not required, Will the Parish still subsidize the school?

***A- Both pastors have agreed to continue a subsidy to maintain affordable tuition. The Board is currently studying the best way to incorporate those funds into the budget and tuition schedule and ensure Cardinal Foley School will have sufficient funds to operate. A decision should be made in the near future. Future subsidies, of course, are subject to the financial health of both parishes. As explained previously, Mass attendance is declining, parish donations are either flat or declining, and these factors impact parish income and sustainability. Going forward, Cardinal Foley School will need to become more dependent on tuition, fundraising, and need-based aid, as its primary sources of income.***

Q. Is the new school considered a Sisters of Mercy School, which both St. Denis and ABVM were? If not, how does these impact scholarships to Merion Mercy and also any discount for attending Merion Mercy coming from a Mercy school?

***A- Cardinal Foley School will continue the Mercy traditions from both Annunciation BVM School and St. Denis School. We will look into the impact on scholarships and /or discounts to Merion Mercy. In the past each Mercy School who had a Sister of Mercy named as a principal received an annual Mercy Scholarship. Once the principal in a Mercy School no longer is a Sister of Mercy, the school is put into a pool with all the schools who have a non Mercy principal but are still considered a Mercy School. From this pool one student is chosen to receive a Mercy Scholarship. As far as the school administration is aware there is no discount for students who attend a parish school with the Mercy tradition and go on to Merion Mercy Academy. MMA offers scholarships and financial aid. Information can be found on their web site.***

Q. Is there any money being provided, tied to naming the school Cardinal Foley, i.e. funding from an endowment coming to the school because it was named after Cardinal Foley?

***A- There is no money tied to naming the school Cardinal Foley.***

Q. Why has there not been any parent meetings with regards to Cardinal Foley?

**A- As you know there was an initial meeting held for both ABVM and St, Denis after the Blue Ribbon Report. At the ABVM meeting there were a number of questions about Cardinal Foley that could not be answered definitively. We want to make sure that parents have some definitive answers and confidence in Cardinal Foley School. As you can see now and imagine there are a number of things still being discussed and worked out specifically related to Cardinal Foley, including tuition, curriculum, etc. Parents will continue to be updated on progress and questions are still encouraged to allow us to investigate issues we could overlook. We fully expect to have a parents meeting in the future that will be constructive and useful to parents.**

Q. Who owns the school? Since before the parishes owned and ran the school.

**A- Cardinal Foley Regional School is a separate entity from the parishes. However, Catholic Education is a primary mission of the parish. In that sense the parishes will still be contributing financial support. At this time we do not know how much that will be.**

Q- In regards to the CYO programs, specifically sports, I am of the understanding that these are parish run and will or may continue to be so. Fair enough. Has there been discussion of establishing a CYO specifically for the Cardinal Foley School? The parishes can still run their own programs and teams, but the school will also have its own. I find it very difficult to understand, and I know many others share my opinion, how we can build a school identity and have the kids unite together, but have them compete against each other in athletics. Thank you for your continuous work with establishing the new school, and if there is anything I can do to help, please let me know. I feel very strongly about the above question/statement and would gladly sit on any committee involved in these discussions, and would also be willing to be involved in the formation of a new CYO program.

**A- All questions that have been received relating to CYO will be addressed by the CYO/YAA committees at each parish meeting that will be held on Wednesday, February 15th. These meetings will be held at both Annunciation and at St. Denis. [see insert below] No decisions have yet been made regarding CYO sports programs.**

**Annunciation Q&A: The Annunciation CYO Meeting will be held in the Church Basement at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>.**

Q- For what it's worth - Any chance we can keep the blue skorts for the girls as part of the spring/fall uniform? They would go nicely with the navy blue pants and I have a bunch of them!

**A- The Board approved a partial uniform phase-in to help alleviate the cost of new uniforms for girls only. Parents will have the option for one year (2012- 13) of using the Annunciation/St. Denis skirt, skort, and jumper. All students, however, must purchase a Cardinal Foley sweater/vest. All boys must wear the new uniform, but the navy blue pants from both school uniforms will remain. A winter sweater/vest will be mandatory. In 2013-14, all students must wear a full Cardinal Foley uniform.**