

March 11, 2016

The process continues to move forward to hire a new principal for St. James/Seton School. Because of the happy fact that it does not happen very often there are a lot of questions that have come up. Hopefully I can answer some of those questions.

The first one is whether we will be hiring an assistant principal. This came up because the first ad that came out was just for the job of principal. To answer this question I have to answer the question of who actually is responsible for making the final decision for hiring the principal. The answer to that is the pastors. Fr. Tom and I are responsible for our parishes and who gets hired in our parish. Since the school is the joint effort of the two parishes, we must work together to make this decision. We will be, and have been, working to get feedback from different people in order to make a good decision. This involves people from the Total Board of Education, who we have been working with all along. Throughout the year we get feedback from parents, teachers, and students that help us know what is needed. We also look to the people that the Archbishop has put in place to oversee our Catholic Schools, the Catholic Schools Office. They have been and will continue to be a part of this process as they are helpful in many other areas of running our school.

Within the next few days we will use one more tool to help with this process. We will put out a very simple survey that can be used by parents and teachers to give us more information that can be helpful in this process. It would be nice to meet with all the different groups like: Home & School Association, Athletic Board, Guardian Angels, teachers, staff, parents and even students. That would be nice but not likely because we don't have two months to work on this process. As I mentioned in my last letter, this is the time of year when schools normally have this kind of turnaround. It also means that we need to work quickly because the other schools that are looking will be making their decisions soon. We don't want to be caught getting whomever is left after all the best candidates have decided where they will be working next year. So we will be using the survey to help round out the information gathering process in a timely manner. The compiled information from this survey will also be available to the candidate screening committee that I mentioned in my other letter. The members of this advisory committee need this information to help them give well informed advice to Fr. Tom and me.

One of the toughest aspects of this process for many people comes because we are in the middle of an election year. Our mode of thinking is that everyone gets a vote. The Church does not run that way. The People of God do not vote on who will lead them. We didn't get to vote on who our messiah would be. God the Father chose His Son for that job. His Son chose the apostles, who chose the bishops, etc.. The purpose of this top down procedure is to insure that we don't get to vote on what the commandments will be or who gets to heaven.

This gets me back to the position of vice-principal. Who hires that person? Do the pastors hire that person? No we don't. That is the job of the principal, just like the hiring of their staff and the teachers is their job. Because these two positions are coming up at the same time the advisory committee will be working with the person to be hired as principal to help them in their decision. But they hire their staff. Because they are new they will be needing input to help them know what they will need. From this angle I hope you can see why we did not start the search for vice-principal yet. We will not wait long for the same reason the hiring of principal is going quickly. But one of the most important factors in finding the right vice-principal is knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the new principal.

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