Notes from first BDFHSA Meeting June 11,2013

* Opened meeting with prayer and Ginny Wallace introduced Sr. Carol Cimino, our new Superintendent of Catholic Schools.
* The name of the organization will be the BDFHSA – Buffalo Diocesan Federation of Home & School Associations.
* Sr. Carol Cimino, presented power point (see attachment)(link?)outlining:
  + Goals and responsibilities for HSA’s; Difference between advisory board and HSA
  + Role of the HSA in marketing/recruiting for the schools
  + Role as Enrollment and Retention Ambassadors for school
  + Nature of relationship between HSA’s and diocese
  + Fundraising vs. Annual Fund
* Additional HSA responsibilities offered by group included: sports and extracurricular support, hospitality to the school community and technology planning.
* Regional school member mentioned need for better communication among supporting parishes. Recommendation to increase communication and support will be future topic for discussion.
* Per Sr. Carol, coming soon: diocesan mandate for all schools to have an advisory board.
* Future goals for group include:
  + Moving away from small gain fundraising toward larger higher profit events and an annual fund at each school
  + Large celebration/awards/recognition event at the end of next year which might include awards for: Most innovative spirituality program for parents, most innovative fundraising event, most successful recruitment/marketing strategy and most innovative way to promote legislation to support Catholic education
  + Creation on an Advisory Board or Council for HSA’s which would meet 3 times per year to foster cooperation and mutual support between diocese and parents in support of principals and faculty with loose by-laws, mission statement and on-going goals.
* Sr. Carol discussed the upcoming ICC (Interdiocesan Curriculum Committee) whitepaper on NYS testing and there was a lively discussion about the recent NY state tests in our schools.
  + The ICC will be making a recommendation that all students who “opt out” based on a parent’s request would have to follow the same procedure in all of our Catholic Schools.
  + Chris Riso, Assistant Superintendent of Government Services for the Department of Catholic Schools, mentioned that the level of teacher and student stress toward these tests should be less at our Catholic Schools because nonpublic schools are not required to include the student test scores as a percentage of the teacher evaluations.
  + A parent who works in the public schools added that each school district has a different plan for how the scores affect a teacher’s evaluation, so often the concerns of one public school teacher will differ greatly from the concerns of another.
* Sr. Carol also discussed additional NYS funding that now exists for AIS (Academic Intervention Services) and security upgrades at schools.
* Chris Riso discussed the role of parents/HSA in supporting/lobbying for mandated services reimbursement and encouraged support of legislation of the Education Investment Tax Credit bill currently before the State Assembly. Parents are urged to sign the petition found at <http://action.investined.org/page/s/Buffalo-Sign-Up>
* Cyndi Horrigan, who partners with Ginny Wallace in the Catholic Alumni Partnership, introduced herself, explained the division of schools (Cyndi - schools east and south of the city, Ginny- schools within city and north) and their role with HSA. Both left cards for respective schools.
* Next steps - Will offer dates for future meetings to determine best date & time to meet, sometime in August.
* Sr. Carol asked those present to consider their participation on Advisory Committee.
* Future topics include:
  + How to engage volunteers
  + Which fundraisers have been most successful & why
* Meeting was adjourned at 10:05 AM