

### YEAREND SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE 2013-14 SCHOOL YEAR

The School Advisory Council was established to serve in an advisory capacity to the Regis Jesuit President and Principals on matters concerning the school. The Council discusses and provides input on timely topics as requested by Fr. Steele or the Principals or other matters requested by Council members deemed timely based on their interaction with the Regis Jesuit community. Sharing of information is an important principle for the Council and it is in this spirit that the Council presents its summary of activity for the 2013-14 school year.

#### SEPTEMBER

**Side by Side Anti-Bullying Initiative:** Adam Dawkins '98 provided an overview of the Side By Side Anti-Bullying initiative. Six classroom meetings over the course of the school year will be devoted to this topic, and there was a kickoff program at the beginning of the school year. Community involvement from parents and alumni will be solicited, and Barbara Coloroso, a nationally-known speaker on this topic, will give a talk to the community. A year-end survey will measure the program's effectiveness. The goal of this program is to turn bystanders into "upstanders," who will actively speak up and work to prevent bullying. RJHS will work to craft this program into one that is not simply "out of a box" but reflects who we are as a school and community. Parents can support by sharing ideas, feedback on what they have observed or heard and suggestions for speakers.

**Community Letter regarding Alcohol Use:** The committee agreed to update this letter and re-release it to the school community, with the support of the other parent groups, in time for the Homecoming Dance to remind parents about the issues surrounding alcohol use.

#### OCTOBER

**Advancement and Fundraising:** John Jackson, the Vice President of Advancement, talked to us about the Advancement Office organization and both short- and long-term goals for fundraising. This year's goal was about \$1.7 million from the Annual Fund and \$375,000 from endowment distributions. The long-term goal for 2019-2020 is a total of \$4 million to match the projected tuition assistance budget for each year.

We discussed how participation in fundraising at RJ compares with that of other Jesuit high schools in the U.S. We appear to be on low end of participation for both parents and alumni. For our alumni, we are around 7-8% participation, whereas the average is around 20-21% and the upper end is around 40%. Some of the possible reasons for our relatively low participation rate may be that RJ has existed as a high school separate from Regis University for a shorter time than many of the other Jesuit high schools have been in existence. Also the campus move could be a possible factor. For parents, we are around 30% whereas the average is above 50%. We discussed whether the past and planned \$800 yearly tuition increases could be affecting parent participation as parents may feel they are already being asked to "contribute" more. We thought it might be interesting to know if there is a correlation between tuition rates and parent participation; in other words, do Jesuit schools with lower tuition rates generally see higher rates of parent participation in fundraising and how do we compare percentage-wise with schools with similar tuition to ours?

#### NOVEMBER

**Performing Arts Center & Student Commons:** Brian Normile gave us an update on the Performing Arts Center & Student Commons. The facility includes: 485-seat theatre with a huge orchestra pit, college counseling offices, communication center, coffee shop, Raider Shop, security office, a scene shop, lots of storage and costume space, ensemble practice rooms, and a green room for dressing. Many activities can be going on at once with this facility; the initial plan is to use it primarily for school events including theatrical productions, vocal and instrumental music concerts, hosting college visits, class meetings/advisement activities, parent meetings, student broadcasts, poetry slam/art showcase, alumni dinners, parent organization meetings, and LARK Gift Gathering parties. Students were heavily consulted on the design and possible uses for the new building.

Fr. Steele brought up the topic of the PAC snack bar as a possible alternative lunch site. We discussed whether this would basically evolve into co-ed lunches, which led to a more general discussion about the desirability of more gender mixing outside of classes. SAC members expressed different opinions on this topic, but Mr. Carruthers encouraged exploring more of the social and extracurricular possibilities provided by RJ's unique two-Division model, without integrating classes. Initially, lunch will not be sold at the PAC snack bar, but students will be able to bring their lunch over to the PAC space and eat there.

### FEBRUARY

**Admissions, iPad Program, Curriculum Across the Divisions:** Alan Carruthers provided a brief summary of admissions trends for this year. Applications for the Boys Division increased, and were steady for the Girls Division this year. Applications for students who could be served by the Learning Services Program is experiencing an increase due to the increased reputation and success of the program. Learning profiles have been crafted based on data from the Learning Services Program, allowing admissions staff to predict with greater accuracy which students will tend to do well after admission to RJHS.

Staff is receiving additional training for the iPad Program, and the cost of iPads will be taken into account when determining financial aid. SAC members expressed concern about the overall infrastructure needs for the iPad Program, and RJHS' readiness to support student technology. We decided to invite Kenny Ramos, head of IT, to discuss this issue in depth at a later meeting.

We discussed various questions regarding curriculum, including overall academic rigor, parity of offerings across the Divisions, and availability of technology and computer programming courses in the Girls Divisions.

### MARCH

**Admissions:** Admissions Directors Patricia Long (GD) and Paul Muller (BD) attended the meeting to answer questions about the RJHS admission process. The application process was recently re-worked to provide a more thorough assessment of applicants by targeting specific traits that indicate those that would probably be successful or those that would struggle in the academically rigorous environment of RJHS. RJHS is also looking for students that are more well-rounded and involved. The applications process is now online and streamlined. All applications are read and assessed by a committee of administration, counselors, faculty and Learning Services staff where each member makes a recommendation. The retention rate of admitted students has increased with this process.

Interest in RJHS has significantly risen and the admission process is competitive for a limited number of seats. Many private schools (charter, boarding, IB) are trying to increase their presence in the community. RJHS is the only Catholic school in the area to fill all its seats (240 in the BD and 185 in the GD). Class sizes have not increased but they have added sections, with classroom space being the biggest limitation. As a community, we need to promote RJHS in a positive light and address rumors by referring people to the Admissions Offices for factual information.

The school works diligently to meet family needs for financial assistance. Approximately 25% of the families receive assistance. Admissions Directors also try not to split up legacy families without due reason and try to take each applicant's best interest and abilities into consideration. The Admissions Directors are the only full-time employees in the department and rely on part-time volunteers for help.

**Community Alcohol Awareness:** The Council discussed the parent letter regarding alcohol use to the community. We agreed that the letter should be distributed via a separate email in addition to the *Red & White*, in time for Prom.

**APRIL**

**Technology:** Kenny Ramos was unavailable, but Alan Carruthers presented information he had provided in answer to specific questions from the SAC.

1. **Bandwidth:** Regis Jesuit has substantially increased contracts with Comcast, Comcast Small Business and Integra to ensure that they have a large enough Internet pipe and dedicated fiber. Their goal is not have any dead spots; service will be able to be picked up everywhere on campus.
2. **Outdoor wireless** is not a priority at the moment, as there is not demonstrated need. Phone hot spots can be used for emergency and cables for specific events can be implemented.
3. **iPad Training:** Online videos and training for the iPad will be available for all students. The former BD Raider Shop will become a facility to provide support to the students; staff are looking into Apple Genius training for some students to help troubleshoot.
4. **Security:** A McAfee firewall has been installed; if that blocks sites that are needed for school-sanctioned research etc., IT will be able to grant access. Downloading copyright material is never allowed and can be tracked.
5. **Apps:** Regis Jesuit has a school app available for iOS and Androids that is available to download for free from both the App Store and Google Play. They also are considering offering an app development course.
6. **IT Staffing:** Regis Jesuit has added a full-time IT position in the Girls Division as the IT office will be in the Boys Division.
7. **Printing Capabilities:** Printers are available in the libraries, but the administration anticipates a lower demand for printing, as students will be able to submit assignments electronically.
8. **iPad Charging:** Students should bring their iPads to school already charged. There will be some charging options on campus, but the expectation is for students to be prepared for the day with fully charged iPads.
9. **Parent Monitoring of Internet Access:** [Commonsensemedia.org](http://Commonsensemedia.org) was recommended as a resource for parents to learn more about this issue. Parents are encouraged to know the code to their student's iPads, phones, etc. and should be checking their students' browser history frequently.
10. **Digital Etiquette:** Regis Jesuit will be doing Digital Citizenship Training with the students, and will establish clear standards for iPad use in the classrooms. A Digital Sabbath (technology-free time) will also be observed upon occasion.

**MAY**

**Wrapping Up:** At our May meeting, we honored the members who completed their terms on the SAC this year: **Barbara Burck, Frank DeLuca, Patrick Maher, Karen Miller, Mary Puhr, Tim Root and Joanie Todd.** We elected David Sanko '82 (GD '13, BD '15), as 2014-15 Chair, and decided to elect the remainder officers after we welcome new members in the fall. Applications will be accepted over the summer and into the beginning of the school year, and selections will be made by the President and Principals before our first meeting in September, 2014.