

YEAREND SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE 2014-15 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 2014-15 school year.

SEPTEMBER

Sustainability Initiative: Rick Sullivan, VP of Operations, presented recent changes made to the Regis Jesuit campus. The goal is for RJHS to become a zero waste facility. This plan is based on Catholic values and Pope Francis' recent messages to use only what we need. RJHS will improve energy efficiency, reduce the use of water and paper, and begin a composting program. RJHS will involve the student environmental clubs to reach these goals. The ultimate goal is for students and parents to become educated on these positive sustainability values and to spread these values to future generations. The challenge is to present that stewardship is part of Catholic social teaching and not based in any political agenda. We are called to be good shepherds of the resources of our world.

Size of the Class of 2018: Currently the BD is at 970 students. The current freshman class is larger than expected. Usually we aim for 70 to 75% yield rate from acceptance letters in the spring. This ratio ended up being at 85%. So the BD freshman class is 30 students greater than the most ideal number. Currently there are 264 freshman boys.

The GD is at 714 students, with 187 girls in the freshman class. The girls yield rate was at 76%. The girls had a similar problem to the boys occur two years ago with the current junior class with a much higher yield rate.

OCTOBER

iPad Program Implementation: Will Cropper '98, Education Technologist provided an overview of the iPad program. The program has gone pretty smoothly without any huge complaints thus far. Applications used in conjunction with the rollout:

- Notability, digital organization in PDF, thus far gone very well but taking notes on paper is still good for many students.
- Teachers are using the Near Pad presentation tool to send out quizzes but everyone must be on the same network to be able to see this. Does not work from home.
- Canvas LMS application extends the learning day and offers collaboration through use of videos, in-class quizzes, immediate grades to grade book and peer feedback and edit capabilities. This is a program that is most prominent in college cultures so it is great that the students will know it prior to going to college. Parents, unfortunately, cannot get logins to Canvas to see student grades, owing to the application's design as more of a college tool.

The iPad Program has increased contact between teachers and students. Teachers and students can instantly respond to questions about assignments. There is a dialogue visible between teachers and students on an ongoing basis that shows contact.

Teacher acceptability has been very good for the iPad program. The biggest challenge is e-books because there are many distributors and the publishers, and their promises/delivery have been inconsistent. Some English teachers reported missing the old textbooks and the opportunity to mark in them but once these teachers have learned how to do this more effectively within their iPad. The overall attitude of teachers towards the iPad has drastically improved. A handful of students showed up to school with the wrong version of iPads or MacBooks

and had to purchase the corrected version. Wi-Fi connections have been upgraded recently at RJHS and are at a similar level to Regis University's connectivity. There will always be areas within the buildings that connectivity will be somewhat inconsistent, this is the nature of Wi-Fi.

Parking Issues: Parking and traffic are difficult, especially in the GD. There is only one exit and one entrance from the Girls Division creating a natural bottleneck. RJHS has conducted a study of and is discussing improvement possibilities, which must necessarily be balanced against financial realities. A roundabout or a traffic signal have been discussed but these often come with a prohibitive price tag. The GD is considering a restructuring of the girls parking lot to provide for a more efficient drop off area and more parking spaces. RJHS encourages all students to carpool but this is difficult for since students need to have their licenses for more than a year to be allowed to drive a carpool.

NOVEMBER

Learning Services Coordinators: Tami Hogan and Christine Oliver serve students who have ADD, ADHD, dyslexia, dysgraphia and some who are on the Autism spectrum. Currently about 10% of students at RJHS work with the Learning Services Department, which is similar to the national average.

To receive services, the student must provide documentation of a disability. This documentation is significant and it explains both the student's strengths and his/her challenges. It is based on a full psychological assessment with a cognitive and achievement battery. Learning Services reviews specific issues for each student with the student's teachers, the Assistant Principal, the student and the student's parents.

The physical space in the BD for the Learning Services office was doubled in the last year and now includes two offices, one for meetings and the other a testing space. The Learning Services Department provides a significant amount of support for the Admissions Office. If a potential incoming student has special educational concerns, Learning Services provides input on whether a child can be successful while attending RJHS. Some of the other services that this department provides include college suggestions for students with learning disabilities and assisting students with letters of recommendation.

JANUARY

College Counselors Update: Monica Huggins provided an overview of the College Counseling Office. The college counselors' goal is to prepare our students to navigate the college admission process by helping them become more comfortable talking with college representatives and advocating for themselves. The new space in the PAC provides a great atmosphere for this type of interaction, as well as presents opportunities for students to connect with college counselors and admissions representatives from numerous universities. More information is available from the College Counseling Office.

Library Redevelopment Overview: Alan Caruthers presented plans for the school to improve the library and technology areas of both Divisions. Inspired by the library at the University of Denver, the plan moves away from the traditional circulation desk to portable staff islands and furniture. It provides more opportunities for group work in a quiet atmosphere while incorporating technology. Currently this change is in the planning stages, but is estimated that it would be a \$1 million renovation to the libraries. Efforts to seek outside funding to cover that costs are currently underway.

Side by Side Program: Celeste Siade, the school therapist, presented the current status of Side by Side (SBS), the bullying prevention program. In an attempt to make the program more effective, a different approach was taken this year to infuse more aspects of SBS throughout the entire RJ experience, rather than solely through advisement. They kicked off the year by including SBS information in Compass Day activities and creating a poster campaign with the Rowdies to spread the word. It is now being more purposefully included in retreats, athletic programs and academics. Side by Side encourages bystanders to come forward and speak up right when the bullying starts, thus becoming upstanders. This approach is considered to be the most effective way to stop bullying in its tracks. More information is available through the Counseling Offices in each Division.

FEBRUARY

Removal of Faculty Voice Mail in 2015-16: Fr. Steele asked for input on the potential option to phase out use of voicemail for individual teachers. Currently, there is a single phone in each department, not a phone for each individual teacher, so it can be challenging for a teacher to know when a voicemail has been left for him/her. It is much more efficient to use a teacher's employee email address since teachers all now have iPads and can view and respond to their email more readily than they can check and reply to a voicemail. If there is a need to have a verbal conversation with a teacher, it is recommended to email them to set that up at a mutually agreeable time.

Members of the SAC agreed that individual voice mailboxes for teachers could be removed as long as there were instructions on how to connect with a teacher via email and set up a phone meeting if needed. This change will be implemented and the new process communicated to parents over the summer.

President Transition: The incoming President of Regis Jesuit is Rev. Paul G Sheridan, SJ. He is coming from Bellarmine College Prep, a Jesuit all-boys high school in San Jose, where he has served as President since 2005. Fr. Sheridan will arrive at Regis Jesuit and attend the June 20, 2015 board retreat. He and Fr. Steele have been talking regularly on the phone and Fr. Sheridan has been receiving briefings from each Division, as well as pertinent information from other offices and committees. The current plan is for Fr. Sheridan to work with Fr. Steele through the month of July to transition into his new role.

Admissions Letters: Acceptance letters went out for the class of 2019 on February 19, 2015. The number of applicants grew again this year, creating a broader and deeper pool of candidates from which to choose. During the selection process, considerable consideration is given to the applicant's profile to make sure that the individual student's specific strengths and needs are taken into account. The goal is to ensure that those who are accepted will succeed at Regis Jesuit in all aspects. It is an emotionally and time-intensive process to make the necessary, yet tough decisions, which everyone involved in the process takes very seriously.

MARCH

Advancement Update: John Jackson, VP of Advancement, provided an overview of his office and those working with him including Bethany Paul and R.J. Tuchscherer '01. The office's responsibilities include major gifts, building the Regis Jesuit community, parent and alumni participation, the Annual Fund, endowment and capital projects. John reviewed the annual operating budget and donation summary. Roughly 80% of donations come from only 20% of the eligible alumni or parents. One of his goals is to increase alumni participation.

The current tuition increase each year is part of a 10-year plan to help close the operating income/expense gap. At the current rate of tuition rate increase, the anticipated annual tuition will be \$19K/yr at the end of the 10-year mark. In addition, \$4 million in tuition assistance is required. Regis Jesuit has roughly 350 students (23%) on some sort of financial aid. RJHS currently compensates the faculty at roughly 90% of the benchmark school districts used for comparison (Littleton, Aurora, and Cherry Creek.), which is a considerable increase over where compensation was just a few years ago. Building the endowment, which is currently at about \$10 million and will grow to about \$13 million once all of the FOUNDATIONS FOR EXCELLENCE pledges are paid, will be critical in keeping faculty salaries competitive and tuition increases in check.

Annual Giving: Bethany Paul provided information on Annual Fund appeals for alumni and Parent Partnership (previously called PACE). Parent Partnership consists of direct mailings, the Autumn Raffle and LARK. Alumni are asked to give through three direct mail appeals each year, the phonathon and special direct appeals for specific project. This year the alumni were called on to "honor your experience and keep the tradition alive." The target goal is 10% participation and currently we are just over 7% involvement.

The school also solicits support from parents of graduates, grandparents and other friends of RJ who are referred to as the school's Companions. They receive three direct mail appeals each year.

Scholarships: Bethany also talked about the school's scholarship program. There are 45 endowed scholarships (\$100K investment) there are also six active Sponsor-a-Student sponsors. She is working to increase numbers in both areas, especially the latter. Sponsoring a student involved a four-year commitment to provide \$2000 a year toward a student's tuition.

Alumni Relations: R.J. spoke about the evolution of the alumni relations from a "social club" to retain the social feel while encouraging the various classes to participate in projects and support the school financially.

APRIL

Teacher/ Faculty Update: Katherine Fay, Director of Human Resources briefed the group about the teacher hiring process and the professional development programs available for teachers at RJHS. Most openings come from retirement rather than non-contract renewal. Compared to the public school sector, there is more turnover due to the lack of tenure vs. public schools. The biggest need for teachers is in higher level math and science. There are 229 faculty positions with an average of eight new hires annually. The compensation package is competitive with the area (currently at 90% pay scale average of the Denver area,) however RJHS has trouble competing with the public PERA retirement package, despite having a 403(b) plan with 5% matching. Teachers are required to obtain a Master Degree within seven years of hiring, and RJHS provides tuition help for masters' programs. Teacher performance is reviewed via direct observation in the classroom by the department chair and/or the Principals, progress against a summary review report, and against goal setting with written mid-year and year-end reviews. Department chairs are active in curriculum reviews and the teacher reviews. Each chair position is applied for and good for a three-year term along with one renewal afterward.

Athletics: John Koslosky, GD Athletic Director, discussed athletic programs. Discussion ensued about the capital needs for a new field house, pool housing, better GD locker facilities and GD training room. Field limitations will force some teams to practice off campus or later in the day after the other teams have used the fields. Head



SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

coaches are hired somewhat differently in each Division. The Boys Division uses a committee when selecting a new coach for the larger programs, like football; the GD coaches are chosen by the AD. Typically, a coach's selection starts by looking internally at the teacher staff and then externally. Athlete recruitment does not happen in any form at Regis Jesuit. Since the BD and the GD are reported to CHSAA as two separate schools and not one combined school, there are no Title IX equity issues.

SAC Membership for 2015-16: The following members of the School Advisory Council are eligible to continue with the group in the 2015-16 school year and have chosen to do so: Jennifer DiBiase, Maureen Hayes, Anne Thrasher, Kelly Moran, Lurette Morton, Eric Brown, Dave Lennert, Brian Bornhorst, Bryan Goodwin and Patrick von Tscharnar.

The following members will be leaving the SAC because their term is over: Jim Clawson '85, Kim Dyer, Kristi Holmes-Espiñeira, Maureen Rose and David Sanko '82. Fr. Steele will be replaced by Fr. Sheridan as CEO and ex-officio member per the bylaws.

Jennifer DiBiase and Lurette Morton agreed to Co-Chair in 2015-16 (pending review and approval or amendment of the SAC bylaws). Dave Lennert agreed to take on the Secretary role with Kelly Moran helping out.

MAY

Bylaws: Bylaws were amended to allow for co-chairs on the SAC. Co-chairs are now allowed if they are authorized by a 2/3 vote and approval of the President and both Principals. Co-chairs were authorized for the 2015-16 SAC.

Recognition: Departing members Jim Clawson '85, Kim Dyer, Kristi Holmes-Espiñeira, Maureen Rose, David Sanko '82, and Fr. Steele were recognized for their service.

Celebration: The end of the 2014-15 school year was celebrated with food and fellowship.