

**Parent Questions/Responses from  
The School Community Conversation held  
December 5, 2018**

→ **What is the plan for the current primary students when they move to second grade next year? Will they go back to the traditional classroom arrangement with two classes per grade and one teacher each?**

- ◆ *Rising second graders will be placed in traditional 2nd-grade classrooms.*
- ◆ *The number of homeroom sections will be determined as enrollment culminates.*
- ◆ *School commission will establish minimum numbers required to substantiate having two sections.*

→ **Is the school seeing more parish families choosing IPS since school 70 became a CFI? If so, is there a marketing plan to keep enrollment where it needs to be? Is the school concerned with future enrollment numbers?**

- ◆ *Sadly, students have left SJOA for IPS schools. Parents need to make a choice between education and formation, which is what we offer.*
- ◆ *School commission is working on revitalizing our “brand” and on the means of marketing our story.*
  - *New website - 2017-2018*
  - *New Annual Fund commitment and kick off*
  - *This is a place we need help from our families!*
- ◆ *Reduced numbers across the entire deanery are a concern to our schools. In this age of consumerism, parents and families are electing to enroll their children in schools based on reasons other than Catholic formation.*

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→ **How are teachers expected to manage this e-learning program when there is a snow day? They will have already planned their lessons and we are asking them to turn on a dime and change the lessons to a distance learning lesson? I don't understand how that is to work, especially for the younger kids who will require help, for those of us with more than one younger child at home. How is that supposed to work?**

- ◆ *We are currently working on our eLearning plan and will be sensitive to the fact that many families will have more than one child who needs to access technology during the course of the day while making our plan.*
- ◆ *Teachers will provide instruction that could be used on any given day to support or supplement classroom learning. It is not dissimilar to making plans for a substitute teacher in a moment's notice.*
- ◆ *Teachers will be available by email for predetermined and communicated amounts of time for student and or parent questions.*
- ◆ *eLearning does not mean 8 hours of instruction or work.*
- ◆ *We are referring to other schools' plans and collaborating to form our plan.*

→ How are we to respond/how should we handle it when you don't acknowledge or respond to our emails/phone calls/requests for meetings? It has happened to me more than once and I know other parents to whom it has happened. What are we supposed to do?

- ◆ *First and foremost, I apologize. It is a priority to hear from all parents.*
- ◆ *Please call the front office and let them know you need me to check email or voicemail or to specifically return a call.*

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→ We pride ourselves on the diversity of our school. However after reviewing the current ISTEP scores, it appears that we are not educating “the diverse” portion of our school. 80.6% of the white students passed both portions of the ISTEP. Only 23% of the black students passed both portions. This number has dropped significantly from 2017 when 46.9% of the black students passed both portions. How is this inequality being addressed? Why is it increasing at such an exorbitant rate?

- ◆ *These are questions we ourselves are asking and take seriously.*
- ◆ *In PLC groups, we have identified subgroups at each grade level, including race..*
- ◆ *Moving forward, professional development to address culturally relevant teaching practices will be offered.*
  - *What has been done to address this?*
    - *Staff members are attending Undoing Racism training, to first address attitude and awareness of glaring achievement gaps.*
    - *Title I is now being offered above grade 4*
    - *Professional development for textbooks for new teachers and teachers who switch grade levels or content area is in place as a common practice.*
    - *Curriculum maps created for this year*
      - ◆ *5-8: Religion, ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies*
      - ◆ *K-4: Religion, ELA, Math*
    - *Working toward common practices across grade levels as priority.*

→ I continue to hear about the group of Title 1 teachers. What are their success rates at improving test scores at their previous positions?

- ◆ *This year, **all** students who qualify for services are receiving services for the first time. We have two staff members in place, neither of whom were previously working in Title I. They are currently administering assessments to measure growth in three areas that were measured at the onset of the year.*
- ◆ *Miss Newport and Mrs. Heck have undergone extensive training and have been implementing the program in a new space since summer.*

→ I also continue to hear about how much money and time is being spent on the Leader in Me program. My feeling is that this is a nice “extra to the menu” program, but when so many of our students are not achieving academically

**perhaps academics should be made a priority and Leader in Me should be put on the back burner.**

- ◆ *The good news is that The Leader in Me program IS academic. It is the foundation for providing students with tools to take ownership over their own learning. All students' W.I.G.s (Wildly Important Goals) are academically aligned with our school-wide goal, which is to improve number sense in Math. Students are equipped with goal-setting skills to identify and utilize strategies that will help them achieve their goals (and ultimately, growth in Math). The program is funded by Title II funds that we receive from IPS - completely separate from the school budget. Included in our membership is professional development and coaching for teachers to support them in these processes.*
- ◆ *The Leader in Me program supports our SJOA school vision of Leadership, Integrity, and Service. Coupled with our Catholic formation, it provides a foundation to shape servant leaders in God's image. TLIM directly aligns to SJOA's mission in forming the whole child.*

**→ I continue to hear about how the school does not have enough money. My daughter has a Simple Solutions math workbook that SJOA bought for each student in her class. To date, her class has completed exactly 10 lessons out of the 140 in the book. At this rate, they will use about 16% of the book for the entire year. Why is the school buying books that aren't being used? On the other hand, she is reading the book "The Boy in the Striped Pajamas" in English class. They do not have enough copies for every student. They have to share. This is a book that has been taught for several years and will probably continue to be taught. Why can't the school get a copy for each student? My point is there does not seem to be a very good use of the funds that the school does have. How is the school deciding on what to spend its money?**

- ◆ *Simple Solutions is a book that is used across grade levels. In other words, it's something that is supposed to be consistently used as a spiral review. It is something that has been an expectation. As we go through the math adoption process this year, we will determine if it will be used going forward.*
- ◆ *(per teacher response to my posing this question) To answer the math side, we had been doing Simple Solutions as part of homework, but I found that grading it could be quite time-consuming, especially since many of the students struggled with the spiral review aspect of it (and the fact that there are a number of students who are not performing quite up to grade level to complete it), and thus it was taking away from the time needed to cover material in the curriculum map. I have tried a more time efficient way of having the students self-correct, but I questioned how effective it was given that a number of students still struggled with that spiral aspect. And so what I have been wanting to do with it so that it would be a more effective review, is to use it as part of a center where students can work with and collaborate with each other on it before self-correcting it. I can easily go back to having the students doing it for homework.*

- ◆ *(per teacher response to this question) We share copies of **The Boy in the Striped Pajamas** with **Christ the King**. It's something we've been doing for three years now and it's through the book share system within the North Deanery. It's a system that saves both schools a bit of money and works well. They had to share the books the first day we started the unit because I hadn't had a chance to grab the novels. Now all is well. :) We have altogether approximately 30, so I'm just alternating the days that the kids read at home.  
(We did not add new items to the order list due to the budget. Janet Andriole)*

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→ **The Strategic Plan: What are the dates for the strategic plan action items' implementation and regular review, reporting, and sharing of progress to the school/parish?**

- ◆ *Each goal in the strategic plan is being monitored by a school commission member and status will be updated in January, March and May.*
- ◆ *School commission will post results on the school website*
- ◆ *The school commission will post summary of monthly minutes beginning in January.*
- ◆ *School administration will communicate via the school newsletter*

→ **How can parents and parishioners be included as important and frequent stakeholders in the school community (more than fundraising), such as with consultation in decision-making processes at the school (e.g., with regard to curriculum, purchasing, behavior plans, etc.)?**

- ◆ *There is not doubt that the inclusion of parents and parishioners in the work of the school is beneficial and needed.*
- ◆ *With the implementation of a textbook adoption cycle, opportunities for parents to provide feedback will be offered. Look for information about the math adoption following Christmas.*
- ◆ *FSF does do more than fundraise. They offer support for classroom teachers and support the work of our Action Teams that organize all the events within the school.*
- ◆ *Specifically, we need parents to sign up and assist with a variety of action items in the Strategic Plan.*
- ◆ *A review of the purpose and responsibilities of the parish school commission , found on the website, also provides information for families.*

→ **How can the school's red-card behavior plans better reflect the SJOA philosophy on affirming the dignity of children? What research is being done to document red-card consequences by race & gender in order to determine whether it is equitable and just? Is the red card system affecting teacher/student relationships and creating negative classroom climates?**

- ◆ *Soon, teachers will undergo professional development in the area of social-emotional learning. From there, the Catholic Identity Action team will set to work on devising a new plan that focuses on the integrity piece within our LIS framework. We will unveil the revised plans in April.*
- ◆ *Circle of Grace training is on the docket for PLC work in late January or early February.*

→ **Can you please share updates on progress from last May's State of the School**

**Address PowerPoint:**

- ◆ *Annual Fund spending update*
  - *Installation of fob entry at 3 exterior doors, entrance into the main office, and two interior doors, including the instructional hallway.*
  - *Purchase of Chromebooks and charging cart for third graders as they are required to take the state's new assessment online.*
  - *Mobymax - Is a newly purchased and implemented online method of identifying and closing achievement gaps.*
- ◆ *Resource/IEP update*
  - *Thanks to our partners at Bishop Chatard High School, we did take over the ISPs for students who qualify for a voucher. We wrote our own plan called a CSEP plan. \*Catholic School Education Plan*
    - *Liz Leone oversees these plans.*
    - *We hired Marla Zinkan to support student goals in grades K - 5.*
    - *Junior High teacher, Maddi Wincek, also works with middle school and junior high students in a part-time capacity.*
- ◆ *Math Progression Plan*
  - *Assurance plan was established to determine when and how alternate math classes are warranted.*
    - *Student performance on state assessments*
    - *Student performance in class*
    - *Student motivation*
    - *Teacher recommendation*
    - *Parent support*
  - *North deanery schools are not all offering Algebra and there is constant discussion about this at our principal meetings.*

**a. What are the “assurances” that have been established to “warrant expediting curriculum for gifted learners” and the “plans to create common instructional times to support student movement when needed and equipping elementary classroom teachers with the means to differentiate within the classroom”?**

- i. Reports/updates regarding the implementation of curriculum maps will be addressed at PLCs in January

- ii. The master schedule is set up so that students at the same grade levels/groups are in specials at the same time so that chunks of instructional time are available for student movement. The actual movement and grouping of students is happening at times at some grades but not consistently. This is something we will work toward.
  - i. The lack of instructional assistants makes this a challenge

**b. What is the current level of math differentiation and movement of gifted learners in the lower and upper elementary grades?**

- i. Gifted is a word reserved for a small number of students. High achieving is more commonly the case. In either case, teachers are encouraged to work with parents and one another to differentiate within the classroom. Certainly, more professional development is needed to assist teachers in meeting individual needs.
- ii. Older students are grouped by performance largely. At grades 5 and 6, we are piloting a project where math classes are divided in a different way.

**c. Curriculum mapping was noted as in-progress last year:**

- i. How will curriculum mapping (progress and results) be shared with the parents and when?
  - i. The maps are meant to be fluid or “living” documents where teachers change, make additions and alter them as they are working in real time. Teachers are using them and finding them helpful if not difference makers. (see addendum of teacher comments in response to this question)
  - ii. The maps need to be condensed and streamlined and can be shared with parents at any time once there is time to accomplish this.
  - iii. Teachers in K-4 need to begin work on maps for science and social studies during the second semester to wrap up by May.
- ii. How are curriculum maps now influencing teachers’ instruction/planning from the perspective of their supervisors? (That is, how is the professional growth of teachers supported by the regular review of their curriculum maps and alignment to standards?)
  - i. We will discuss at PLCs in January

- ii. The use of maps and their effectiveness will be discussed in post-observation discussions
  - iii. What curriculum evaluation is being undertaken to determine if the curriculum maps and materials represent the mission, vision, and philosophy of SJOA school?
    - i. Father Guy has published 10 major points for Catholic education that we will use to determine if materials are appropriate
- **How much instructional time is used for non-academic Leader in Me activities each week? What research evidence provides the positive impact of Leader in Me on student achievement and also to the alignment to SJOA's mission, vision, and philosophy?**
  - ◆ *Synergy Sessions vary between clubs and enrichment, 2 quarters each*
  - ◆ *Sometimes LIM occurs during morning meeting, which we have reduced from 5 to 2 times a week.*
  - ◆ *Random events such as leadership day or the symposium preparation take the time of some students involved; however, the skills gained in writing and speaking should not be categorized as non-academic.*
  - ◆ *There is ample research to support the positive impact of TLIM in student achievement and also in student behavior, family involvement, and school climate. Access to this research can be provided upon request as it is a lengthy document.*
- **What is the plan for the responsibilities that the position of Assistant Principal used to undertake?**
  - ◆ Incidentally, at the beginning of last year, the assistant principal and the person hired as the curriculum specialist and the head of food services vacated their positions leaving a need to cover the following specific roles within the school to be accounted for:
    - Professional Learning Communities **Now Janet, Sarah Funk and Blaire Dosmann**
    - Title I and II and III spending **Now Blaire Dosmann**
    - Professional Development monies: purchasing and scheduling and reimbursements **Now Blaire Dosmann**
    - Discipline **Now Grade Level Discipline Liaisons and Janet Andriole**
    - CTC - Cite Testing Coordinator (Mrs. Naab filled this role alongside serving as the 5/6 math teacher) - **Now Gina Reese**
    - All major events such as Catholic Schools Week - **Now Action Teams**
    - Cafeteria program that meets state and federal food guidelines - **Claire Jackson was hired and has done a great job learning on her feet.**