

## President's Report

April 23, 2020

I want to begin this report by commending our Academy staff for the dedicated, steadfast, creative and amazing work done in the past few weeks. We have pivoted our entire structure of engagement with scholars and families in a manner that is successful and continuing to strengthen. In addition, the Advancement, Finance and HR Departments have been working diligently. Our Mission and Guiding Principles have been at the core of all of our decisions. In many ways, the work we have done since August 1, 2016 to build leadership and capacity across the Academy has been brought to fruition in these unfamiliar and unforeseen circumstances. The Academy Board has been an integral part of positioning our organization to be able to pivot in such an impactful way.

1. Academics – Pat Exner has submitted a report with the Academic overview. Our challenges going forward include preparing for a summer program, replacement of Chromebooks as they break, keeping scholars engaged as time progresses and internet access for scholars when the Comcast offer ends.
2. Scholar and Family Needs
  - A. Helpline – One of our first decisions was to build a helpline for families. This is staffed by the secretary of each school. In addition, City Connects and Catholic Charities personnel are building resources lists which are available to families through many types of communication. Many of the calls to the helpline are for technology assistance – such as engaging with the free 60 day Comcast services.
  - B. Family contacts – we are connecting with scholars and families in many ways. All areas of staff are calling families, especially those who we experience as most vulnerable. As of Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, there has been 6409 point of contact for 504 scholars, with 100% of scholars contacted.
  - C. Food – we have been distributing food from Sheridan Story each week, both having families come to the school site and delivering for those who are in need and can't get to the site. We have also distributed some food from the Ascension Parish Food shelf.
  - D. Chromebooks - Through the sharing of resources throughout the Academy, each Academy scholar has a Chromebook or device in their home (other than a cell phone) to use for learning.
  - E. Emergency Needs – we have resources available to assist families with rent and utilities and are continuing to connect with families to better understand their needs. We have also been reaching out to families to assist them in applying for the Aim Higher Emergency Scholarships.
3. Advancement Department – Laura Wagner has submitted an Advancement Department report.
4. Finance and HR:
  - A. Finance - We applied for the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan using the suggested formula. We received a loan on Monday, April 20, 2020 for \$1,002,700. We have every reason to believe the entire amount will be forgiven by using the funds in the manner designated as well as the necessary amount of FTE's on June 30<sup>th</sup>. In addition we are working with the Archdiocese as they assist funders in understanding the needs of our schools as well as other mission schools. We continue to monitor our cash flow needs during this time of uncertainty. I have kept in regular contact with Meg Nodzon from the GHR Foundation and she assures us of their support and care.

- B. HR - Knowing that we have a fiscal responsibility to continue to engage with the mission of the parish and Academy, we have found it necessary to furlough those employees whose primary work is not occurring at this time. These individuals have been contacted. They include those who are performing before and after school services, cafeteria services, most church musicians and certain school personnel whose primary work is not occurring at this time. This week we will work back from the June 30<sup>th</sup> date to determine when these employees will be brought back from furlough and if any other employment changes need to be made. We also want to share that Aurora Morafka, the Ascension Parish Office receptionist has retired.
- C. Upcoming challenges in addition to the ones listed above include:
- Enrollment
  - 2020-21 Budget including any “right sizing” that may or can happen
  - 2020-21 Employee Letters of Agreement

I want to close by sharing that much of what I have described above is unparalleled in either public, charter or non-public schools serving children with our demographics. I am without words (but not without tears) to express the gratitude I have for each and every member of our blessed community. We are truly thankful for the countless gracious gifts we have been given, and are committed to sharing and serving through those gifts into the future.