



Faith * Service * Scholarship

9/12/22

To all COS Parish and School Families,

As we look to embark on the 22-23 school year at Communion of Saints School, we want to better communicate with the broader Communion of Saints community on developments involving the short and long-term vision for the school.

While Communion of Saints School has grown enrollment for the upcoming school year, gone are the days where families seeking a Catholic education send their children to the local Parish School. The demographics from which our schools, public or private, have to draw is shrinking and an era of school choice and competition has taken hold. While Communion of Saints School has excelled in delivering on its mission to form students in both faith and knowledge, welcoming all with dignity, and providing an education that prepares students for Higher Education and life, our messaging of this success, to date, may have been lacking. Consequently, we are pleased to announce developments designed to help better position Communion of Saints School competitively now, and into the future.

First, Mrs. Philomena (Philly) O'Hare is serving as the School's Director of Marketing and Admissions. Philly has already updated the school website, redesigned the school logo, established our Niche profile, and revitalized school spirit wear. Philly also manages the school's social media accounts and marketing efforts. Plans are underway to streamline and update the school's admission and enrollment process. Second, we have established a new advisory committee to act as an additional, independent, research-driven resource in support of the school's administration and the school. The Communion of Saints School Advisory Committee (COSSAC) will aid the administration in gaining additional insights and advice, exploring new opportunities, stimulating robust conversations, and seeking continued innovation and prioritization in education while maintaining a focus on the school's mission. We emphasize "research-driven," as any advice from the COSSAC will not be one person or one group's vision, but rather it will be based on findings that will best support Communion of Saints School's advancement and success.

The COSSAC is composed of the following members Stephen and Eileen Ewen, Ryan Ryzner, and Jason Reed, augmented with the advice and research efforts of parishioner, Queenie Fitzpatrick. Additionally, the COSSAC will engage in close consultation with Philly O'Hare.

Stephen and Eileen (St. Ann '92) have helped organize the committee to serve together as a single seat on the COSSAC. They are COS Parishioners, the parents of 3 current COS students and one graduate, and provide representation from the existing school parents. Ryan Ryzner (St. Ann '91) is the President of Benedictine High School, and brings substantial expertise in education and school administration. Jason Reed is the Director of Equity and Inclusion for Holy Name High School, having held a previously similar role at St. Ignatius High School and brings material school administration experience as well as a truly independent voice. Queenie Fitzpatrick is an active COS parishioner and former St. Ann School parent of five graduates.

As an initial step, the COSSAC set out to independently establish how Communion of Saints School is perceived by the high school community, and whether Communion of Saints School has been as successful at its mission as we believe. In this regard, the COSSAC interviewed the Directors of Admissions at a wide range of area high schools. The good news is that COS students are extremely well prepared for high school and beyond. Quotes from these school administrators can be found on the following page.

As pleasing as it is to know that the hard work of all in our school community has built a strong foundation, a drive for continuous improvement and growth is essential if we want not only to succeed, but to thrive. It is in this regard that such actions as the hiring of a Marketing and Admissions Director and the establishment of the COSSAC have occurred. Moving forward, we fully intend to be more communicative with COS parishioners and school families regarding developments. Together, with thoughtful, honest analysis and proactive planning, Communion of Saints School will be a competitive leader among Catholic Schools in our area providing a strong Catholic education.

Sincerely,

Father John McNulty - Pastor

Mrs. Loretta Pilla - Principal

What area high schools have to say about COS:

"Communion of Saints students have a high success rate at Beaumont. They come prepared to thrive in Beaumont's college preparatory and IB classes."

- Jennifer Nye, Director of Enrollment Management at Beaumont School

"For decades now, Communion of Saints has sent some of their best and brightest boys to Saint Ignatius High School. We are grateful for their loyal partnership in Catholic education and look forward to continuing our fruitful relationship with this wonderful school for many, many years. Go Sabres!!"

- Patrick O'Rourke, Admissions Director at St. Ignatius High School

"The young men from Communion of Saints have proven well-rounded, taking advantage of the numerous opportunities presented to them at Benedictine High School. Whether it is in the performing arts, participation in one or more of our 11 athletic programs, or members in multiple clubs."

- Ryan Ryzner, President of Benedictine High School

"We are impressed with how COS students step right in as Leaders among their class."

- Vincent Bonacci, Gilmour Director of Admissions

"The young men and women from Communion of Saints School are impressive, well rounded students who work hard to excel in the classroom, provide service in the community and participate in extracurricular activities and athletics. They take advantage of the opportunities given to them and are truly immersed in the VASJ community. We applaud the education the students at Communion of Saints have received, and know that the students who join us at VASJ for high school will be among our leaders of tomorrow."

- Barb DiTurno, Director of Admissions at Villa Angela - St. Joseph High School

"Communion of Saints girls find their voice and become empowered to take risks and authentically express themselves through a variety of ways. They become an important part of our celebrated community at Hathaway Brown School."

- Elizabeth Pinkerton, Director of Enrollment Management, Hathaway Brown School