



St. Francis de Sales High School

April 2019

Dear St. Francis de Sales Community,

As spring is upon us, I thought it would be a good time to provide you with an update on our progress toward implementing a Work Study program at St. Francis de Sales High School in the fall of 2020.

As you may recall, we formed an exploratory committee over a year ago with representatives from Big Shoulders Fund, the Archdiocese of Chicago, and St. Francis de Sales High School to discuss the potential for the school to initiate a Work Study program, in which student education would be supplemented by real-world experience in local businesses.

The committee spent the better part of the last year talking to community members, businesses, families, area elementary schools, and alumni to understand their interest in and the potential for a Work Study program. **The response and enthusiasm for the program have been overwhelmingly positive.**

In Work Study, students obtain a quality, college prep education while developing real world job skills by working one day per week. A Work Study program will provide our students with a tremendous opportunity to gain valuable college and career skills and life experiences.

As we proceed to implement Work Study for the 2020-21 school year, we want to keep you up to date on how our work is proceeding:

- In the last few months, more jobs have been secured and **we currently have over ten job partners committed to supporting the Work Study Program.** The work to secure the jobs necessary to support Work Study is being lead by a committee of community leaders including two SFDS alumni John Czulno and Mike Zunica, former Alderman Ed Vrdolyak, and others. Director of Business Development, Mike Dooley is actively working with our jobs committee on expanding these partnerships. *Please contact Mike at 773-401-9810 for more information.*
- We have also established an Academic Committee that is working to structure school programming to ensure that the curricular content and instructional time best serve

students' academic needs. Serving on this committee are numerous academic leaders from both the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Big Shoulders Fund.

- In preparation for the Work Study program, we are adjusting schedules slightly for the 2019-20 school year to offer entry college-level courses in concert with St. Xavier University to our Junior and Senior students.
- We continue to meet bi-weekly with Big Shoulders and the Archdiocese to structure the Work Study program so that it ensures success for our students in the workplace, at school and in life.

We will be spending the next few months continuing to build our job partners and working to meet our goal to begin the Work Study Program in the fall of 2020. We will keep you updated throughout the spring and summer.

If you want to discuss or need more information please reach out to me. We truly believe the Work Study Program will transform the lives of our students, preparing them for success in college and in life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Kimec', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Kimec