



Goals for Strategic Planning 2015–2021

Mission Statement

Saint Joseph Regional High School, under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Newark, is a college preparatory school for young men. The school strives to develop – mind, body and soul – the full potential of all its students in a nurturing Christian environment in the tradition of the Xaverian Brothers, as informed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In realizing its mission, we graduate the *Vir Fidelis*, the “Faithful Man,” who thinks critically, acts responsibly, leads ethically, serves generously and emulates humbly the example of our patron, St. Joseph.



Strategic Plan 2015-2021

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Introduction

During the 2012-13 academic year, Saint Joseph Regional High School completed an intensive self-study called “Excellence by Design” in preparation for a visit by representatives of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The Visiting Committee was on campus from November 11, 2013 through November 14, 2013, and submitted its final report, recommending full accreditation, on January 9, 2014.

Aside from affirming the student performance objectives that were part of the “Excellence by Design” protocol, the Visiting Committee recommended in its report that Saint Joseph Regional High School develop a strategic plan that would carry the school through the period of accreditation (i.e. the 2020-21 academic year).

Saint Joseph Regional High School had already formulated plans in specific areas of school life, especially facilities and, of course, technology, since a three year Technology Plan is a requirement of the Archdiocese of Newark. Additionally, the school’s leadership had a vision for growing the school academically and spiritually, and for cultivating the gifts and talents of its community even as it grew its enrollment. However, the school had not formalized a strategic initiative for its future.

With that mind, the Board of Consultants and school administration identified the six key areas for planning (admissions, institutional advancement, academic programming, Catholic identity, technology and facilities) and assembled committees that included faculty, board members, alumni and parents. These committees then met several times during the fall of 2014; in January of 2015, the individual committees convened to hear the reports and recommendations of each of the six groups. Throughout

the spring of 2015, the Board of Consultants met to prioritize the recommendations, brainstorm methods of gathering the resources necessary to implement the recommendations, and finally to assemble a timeline for implementing the recommendations of each committee.

The details of those recommendations follow.

I. Admissions

Developing a comprehensive admissions plan was the first and most essential step in the school's strategic plan. Since the school's principal source of income remains tuition, growing the school's enrollment (and cultivating that enrollment in all demographic areas) is fundamental to the school's long-term viability as an academic institution.

The Admissions team currently includes an Admissions Director and Assistant Admissions Director. These individuals visit local Catholic elementary schools, host SJR's Open House programs (three times annually), and direct the "Knight for a Day" program for 7th and 8th grade visitors. The Admissions team also works to develop marketing and public relations materials (with the assistance of the Development Office), and, along with the principal, make decisions about admissions and financial aid.

Several areas have become prominent in the school's consideration of enrollment and its growth: the accessibility of transportation and its potential for making St. Joe's a viable choice for more families, the personalization of its outreach to the families of prospective students, and the implementation of an International Student program. And in conjunction with its goals for Institutional Advancement, Saint Joseph Regional High School must consider ways to provide financial aid without simply discounting the tuition collected to fund the annual operating budget.

With these considerations in mind, the Admissions Committee recommends that

- The school identify stops and implement a bus route for students from Orange County, New York.
- The Admissions department will increase direct, personal outreach to prospective students
 - Personalized hand-written notes will be sent to every student who visits SJR as a “Knight for a Day.”
 - Selected SJR parents will individually call the parents of students who attend an Open House program.
 - Local community gatherings, hosted by SJR parents, will be run for the families of students in targeted communities.
- The Admissions program will initiate outreach to international students and consider the possibility of establishing an ESL program at the school to serve the interests of such students.
- Busing routes will be examined with the intention of creating centralized bus stops to serve students in southern Bergen County and, potentially, Manhattan.
- The school will examine ways to provide scholarships, based on financial need that do not impact the annual operating budget
 - Cultivate sponsors who “adopt” needy students.
 - Make the Scholarship Fund the beneficiary of a major gift campaign.

Work Already Underway:

- *SJR has partnered with Immaculate Heart Academy to offer a bus route to Orange County students*

- *SJR has engaged the services of Ivy International in securing a pool of prospective international students who, via Skype interviews and Toefel scores, have demonstrated an ability to communicate effectively without significant ESL services*
- *SJR will schedule a member of its staff, certified in English as a Second Language, to provide basic services to international students*
- *Follow-up with “Knights for a Day” who visited during the spring of 2015 received the direct communications outlined above.*

II. Institutional Advancement

In 2002-2004, Saint Joseph Regional High School conducted its first (and to this date only) Capital Campaign (“Profiles in Excellence”) that resulted in the construction of a turf all-weather field, a field-house (weight room/locker room) adjacent to the stadium, a chemistry lab in room 212 and a complete renovation of what is now The Inserra Theater. That campaign took three years to complete, and led to the hiring, during the 2007-2008 academic year, of the school’s first Development Director. In its early years, the development office focused more on public relations and alumni relations than in direct fundraising activities. In 2011, the school hired its current Development Director; in 2012 it added a part-time Alumni Director, and in 2014, hired an Associate Director of Development. During the past several years, the Green Knights Annual Fund has grown significantly. Project driven by design since 2011, the Annual Fund has provided the resources to build the Media Center (2011), renovate the gymnasium locker room complex (2012), resurface the turf field (2013), build a new biology lab on the second floor (2014) and build a second biology lab and STEM/physics classroom (2015). As a result

of the Annual Fund, the school has been able to complete these projects without significantly impacting the annual budget.

As time goes on, however, and tuition becomes increasingly burdensome for families who would like to provide their sons with the opportunity for a Catholic high school education, it is increasingly important that the school develop resources that will make its operation less dependent on tuition. In this regard, it is the recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee that the school

- Support the work already undertaken by the Development Office, by engaging the services of professional consultants who can provide assistance in wealth screening and the identification of major gift prospects, whom the school can then begin to cultivate.
- Purchase and utilize wealth screening software of its own.
- Ultimately, the school needs to employ a full-time alumni director. In the interim, SJR needs to
 - Coordinate annual reunions in milestone years.
 - Identify class representatives who will maintain open lines of communication with their classmates.
 - Form an Alumni Advisory Board to assist with alumni events and communications.
 - Expand the school’s current schedule of alumni events to include regional events (New York City, Boston, Florida) and a slate of athletic events to supplement the alumni soccer, hockey and basketball games already being played.
- There is a serious need for the school to move to a President/Principal model so as to enhance institutional advancement. In such a model, the President directs the marketing and fundraising mission of the school, while the Principal directs the day-to-day operation of the

institution. This leadership structure must be approved by the Archdiocese of Newark, which needs to be assured that such a change will be cost-effective.

In hiring an Associate Director of Development in 2014, SJR has taken the first step in enhancing its presence on social media, and in expanding its public relations efforts. As time goes on, the school will need to consider ways to expand/enhance its social media platforms. As a way of improving the timeliness of its publications for maximum public relations effect, the school will consider expanding the publication of its *Knightlines* magazine from twice yearly (January, July) to three times annually (January, May, September).

- To formalize that effort, SJR needs to engage the professional services of a marketing agency to develop and implement a consistent school “brand” (logo, seal, font, etc) in all its publications and apparel.
- Inasmuch as the school website was last “reimagined” in October, 2010, it is a priority to investigate other school websites and web hosting options so as to roll out a re-designed Saint Joseph Regional High School website in 2015.

Work Already Underway

- *A professional marketing agency in Connecticut has been working with the Development Office to develop the details of the SJR brand. It will be available for implementation during the 2015-16 school year.*
- *At the behest of the Board of Consultants, the school has interviewed several professional development/fundraising consultants, who are expected to provide proposals for work to be completed during the 2015-16 school year.*

- *The Development and Technology Offices are currently working with the school administration to research other school and business websites to identify characteristics that it believes will enhance the image of Saint Joseph Regional High School and create a user-friendly experience for those who visit our site.*

III. Academic Programs

The academic program is the foundation of the “product” the school is providing to its families. Keeping that program state-of-the-art in terms of ever-changing technology, and continuing to ensure that the curriculum effectively prepares students for success in college and beyond is essential for the school’s ongoing success.

The foundation of the current academic program is a master schedule that has been in effect at Saint Joseph Regional High School for more than two decades. Its principal asset is its 7 day cyclical rotation that allows for daily variety, and sets a different meeting time for every class every seven days. It is a schedule that has met with widespread and long-term approval from both faculty and students.

On the other hand, the schedule is rigid, and can be restricting. Recognizing that the school’s ability to provide flexible scheduling for specialized classes and programs is limited by this structure, the Strategic Planning Committee recommends that the school investigate scheduling options that provide more lab time, more time for Advanced Placement classes, and a provision to encourage part-time teaching for individuals who might be able to teach a specialized subject but can’t commit to a rotating schedule that changes day to day.

Finally, the school has identified for itself, during the course of its Middle States Self-Study, several student performance goals that it is committed to achieving during the seven year period from 2014 through 2021.

To that end, the Committee recommends that the school

- Implement a one-to-one Chromebook program that can be utilized by teachers in all disciplines throughout the curriculum.
- Establish a committee to review the master schedule, evaluate schedule structures in other schools and identify a new (or at least modified) master schedule that address at least some of the concerns identified above in a fashion that is financially viable.
- Investigate, develop and ultimately implement a “health and wellness” program to encourage a culture of healthy choices that is promoted by the school nurse, trainer, physical education and health department and the school cafeteria.
- Investigate, develop and introduce new elective options based on the master schedule.
- Create a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) classroom and will develop a program that encourages critical thinking and problem solving skills across the curriculum, but especially in the areas of science and math; select students with demonstrated aptitude in these areas to participate in a specialized program.
- Develop and implement “mini-academies” devoted to specialized subject matter (a business academy, a theater academy, a STEM academy) that will provide a cluster of classes in each specialized area for students who wish to concentrate on particular courses of study.

- Will explore the possibility of utilizing study periods for half year classes (SAT prep, personal finance, leadership development).
- Will create opportunities for student leadership and foster the development of the whole person through extracurricular programs by
 - Increasing extracurricular offerings
 - Increasing intramural programming
 - Decreasing (and eventually eliminating) student suspensions and disqualifications for infractions in interscholastic athletic competitions
 - Decreasing the number of students who are academically ineligible to participate in extracurricular programs by early and aggressive intervention of coaches, moderators and counselors.
- Will also undertake to improve critical thinking skills in core subject areas by
 - Increasing the number of students taking the ACT
 - Developing the academic skills necessary to improve ACT scoring
 - Increasing the number of students taking and passing AP tests.

Work Already Underway

- *The STEM classroom will be created in room 110 during the summer of 2015.*
- *The one-to-one Chromebook program will begin its “rollout” in September of 2015 with the Class of 2019.*

IV. Catholic Identity

As enunciated in our Mission Statement, Saint Joseph Regional High School is a Catholic school, founded in the tradition of the Xaverian Brothers, grown in the charism of the Marist Brothers, and operated by the Archdiocese of Newark.

In 1997, the Xaverian Brothers, who had administered the school since 1962, withdrew from the Archdiocese of Newark to focus their attention on the schools owned by the Order, and on the missionary work conducted by the Xaverian Brothers worldwide. Since that time, Saint Joseph Regional High School has had a lay administration, though it has developed a relationship, over the past decade, with the Marist Brothers, whose resources and facilities it utilizes for retreats, leadership development and social outreach.

Keeping in mind that the school's Catholic identity is the thing that provides the school with its inherently unique mission, the Strategic Planning Committee recommends that

- The school develop a sequential in-school retreat program for all students at each grade level. The retreat program will seek to develop and enhance leadership skills, highlight the importance of outreach and service to others, and instill a respect for the individuality and uniqueness of each individual.
- The members of the theology department take a leadership role in organizing school liturgies and in involving a diverse student population in participating in liturgical celebrations by serving as lectors and altar servers.
- SJR actively seek opportunities to serve the local community through social outreach.

- The school hire a full-time campus minister to direct faith formation (as opposed to directing service projects). The campus minister will be responsible for coordinating major social outreach projects (such as Habitat for Humanity projects, international service opportunities), directing out of school retreat opportunities for all students, and coordinating leadership academies intended to enable all students to complete a mandatory program of leadership development.
- The direction of monthly service programs will be the responsibility of the Student Activities Council and the Saint Joseph Regional High School UNICO chapter.
- Recognizing the importance of offering the entire school community opportunities to explore their faith, SJR will develop a faith formation program for adults (parents and faculty).
- Given the school’s history with the Xaverian Brothers who founded the school in 1962 and established its foundations, and its more recent history with the Marist Brothers, with whom it shares a common goal “to make Jesus known and loved”, SJR will identify opportunities to develop a greater awareness among students, parents and faculty, of the Marist and Xaverian missions.
- Saint Joseph Regional High School will seek to develop Christian Citizenship by
 - Promoting an increase in the number of students who exceed required numbers of service hours.
 - Increasing student service to the Marist summer camp programs.
 - Developing effective student retreat leaders.
 - Increasing student involvement in both outside and in-school retreat programs.
 - Increasing student involvement in school liturgies and prayer services.

Work Already Underway:

- *The school has hired a full-time campus minister for the 2015-16 academic year.*
- *The school has constructed a food pantry in the old Brother's Residence and has arranged with Our Lady of Mercy Church in Park Ridge to identify families for whom it will provide a monthly food donation.*
- *The direction of charitable drives (toy drive, food drive, toiletry drive, cereal drive, etc.) will be undertaken by the Student Council and the SJR UNICO chapter during the 2015-16 academic year.*

V. Developing Technological Proficiency in Students and Educators

Given the ever-changing role of technology in the modern workplace, and the growth of technology in education, Saint Joseph Regional High School has been committed to integrating technology into daily instruction for some time. The construction of the Media Center in 2011, and the hiring of a Media Specialist to direct the resources of the facility was essential to making educational technology accessible to students and faculty. Additionally, the school has committed to expanding its technological infrastructure each year to support this growth.

In 2014, the school purchased two Chromebook carts (one for each floor) so that teachers could utilize this compact and inexpensive technology in the classroom. In 2015, all freshmen will purchase their own Chromebooks, and the one-to-one program will continue until every student in the building has his own device. Chromebook technology was selected because of its affordability, its versatility and its practicality. The school's management system will enable teachers to see what students are

accessing in the classroom, and ensure that the technology brought into the classroom is used in the service of an assigned educational objective. Like an increasing number of public and non-public school systems, SJR sees the Chromebook as the best technology available to serve its students' classroom needs.

Since technological advances are ongoing, it is difficult to accurately identify a school's needs too far into the future. It is essential, then, that in developing its technology plan for the six remaining years until its next Middle States evaluation, Saint Joseph Regional High School must engage professional technology services to determine the strengths and weaknesses of its current infrastructure, and to identify a plan to upgrade that infrastructure to address the school's short term and long term technology needs.

With these observations in mind, the Strategic Planning Committee recommends that

- Having researched and evaluated current educational technology in terms of its functionality, economy and ability to be monitored and controlled by the classroom teacher, Saint Joseph Regional High School has committed to the implementation of a one-to-one Chromebook program, to be initiated with the Class of 2019 during the 2015-16 academic year. Each subsequent class will be equipped with Chromebooks so that by the 2019-2020 school year, all students and teachers will be using these devices.
- In preparation for the implementation of this program, a comprehensive mapping and upgrading of all access points and switches in the school building must be completed during the summer of 2015.
- The school supply professional development directed at enabling the school faculty to utilize Chromebooks effectively, design interactive assignments and employ

these devices to problem solve and apply learned concepts in a fashion that promotes collaboration among classmates, as well as independent learning.

- The school increase staffing (a Director of Technology to oversee the network and infrastructure, and a separate teacher to provide basic instruction, as well as advanced course work) to assist the school and faculty in
 - Trouble-shooting problems.
 - Working with students who have learning differences.
 - Challenging students with exceptional abilities.
 - Bringing “blended learning” effectively into the classroom.
 - Developing meaningful lessons for students to complete outside of school, especially Virtual Snow Days.
- The school anticipate and allocate the resources for ongoing upgrades to the school’s technology infrastructure, as well as the devices available
 - In the computer lab.
 - In the Media Center.
 - In each teacher’s classroom.
- SJR further promote Smart-board technology, encourage the development of “flipped classroom” opportunities, and add advanced technology courses to the school’s course of study.
- The school explore ways to harness additional bandwidth.

Work Already Underway:

- *Future Generations conducted a professional technology assessment in the spring of 2015, and presented the school with several proposals for upgrading its infrastructure; based on their recommendations, in the summer of*

2015, access points were added to every classroom, and new switches were installed to improve processing speed throughout the building, even when multiple devices are being used simultaneously.

- *In the summer of 2014, two carts with 30 Chromebooks were purchased and set-up on the first and second floor of the building; teachers were encouraged, under the direction of the school's Media Specialist, to explore the capabilities of these devices in all disciplines.*
- *Chromebooks for the members of the Class of 2019, and for the teachers who will be working with these students in class, have been purchased and will be introduced in September, 2015.*

VI. Enhancing School Facilities

In a building that is now fifty-three years old, facility maintenance is a priority that Saint Joseph Regional High School has recognized as critical for a number of years.

Aside from initiating significant upgrades to its facilities through the Profiles in Excellence Capital Campaign in 2004-2007, the school has also facilitated renovations to individual classrooms in its "Adopt a Classroom" campaign of 2009, and in the sequence of construction projects the school has undertaken since 2011.

Moving ahead, the Strategic Planning Committee recommends that

- Saint Joseph Regional High School implement a systematic facilities plan to create, renovate or re-furbish the school's existing facilities.
 - SJR will repair its core electrical infrastructure, which had deteriorated over the school's 53 year history, and was further damaged by Hurricane Sandy. Inasmuch as this infrastructure provides electrical power to the entire

school complex, ensuring its continued functionality is the top facilities priority.

- SJR will implement phase II of its science laboratory upgrades by converting the second floor dark room, second floor office/storage room and current physics lab (room 209) into a new biology room with a bi-sected complex that includes a 30 seat instructional classroom and a 30 station science lab. Additionally, the current biology lab (room 111) will be converted to a flexible STEM classroom with lab tables for demonstrations and physics labs.
- SJR will renovate the lounge and the office space in the front of the building to provide better security, increased office space and an improved aesthetic.
- SJR will embark on a five year program during which it will mill and/or repave 20% of the existing parking lot each fiscal year.
- SJR will repair/replace the fire doors in all existing stairwells.
- SJR will relocate the existing wrestling room in the old Brother's Residence and in doing so, provide closer, more practical access to the gym locker room complex. This project will require an extensive renovation of an existing area of the Brother's residence (old television room, old library, old kitchen). It will have a second benefit in that the theater props, costumes and equipment, currently stored in the Brother's Residence on the opposite side of the school from the theater, will be relocated to the current wrestling room, immediately adjacent to the theater.
- SJR will replace the bleachers and renovate the gymnasium so as to improve safety, access and aesthetics.

- SJR will renovate all bathrooms throughout the building.
- SJR will completely revamp the existing communication system that connects classrooms to the main office so as to enhance safety and the school's ability to respond to emergency situations.

Work Already Underway

- *A survey of the school's electrical infrastructure was completed in the spring of 2015 and a plan for its renovation was devised; the work will be completed in August, 2015, when a complete 3 day shut-down of the school's electrical systems can be scheduled.*
- *Phase II of the science lab project has been undertaken. The project was offered for bid by the Archdiocese of Newark, and a contractor was identified. All furnishings for the new rooms/labs have been ordered. It is anticipated that the new biology complex and physics/STEM classroom will be ready for the opening of school in September, 2015.*
- *Proposals for the repaving of the parking lot on the south side of the school (and for the installation of speed bumps) have been received.*

Strategic Planning Committee Volunteers

Committee for Admissions

- Daniel Kelly '87,
Board of Consultants,
Committee Chair
- Daniel Davis '99
Theology Teacher
- Michael Doherty '82
Director of Admissions
- Karl Kilb '82
Board of Consultants
- August Hoffmann '99
Assistant Director of Admissions
- Christine Neglia
Parent
- Monsignor Jack O'Keefe
Board of Consultants
- Brian Prendergast '78
Board of Consultants

Committee for Institutional Advancement

- Tracey Taylor
Director of Development
Committee Chair
- Kevin Bamrick '89
Alumnus
- David Connolly '73
Alumnus
- Douglas Duchak
Alumni Parent
Board of Consultants
- Christopher Farrell
Alumni Parent
Board of Consultants
- Michael Mendillo '82
Alumnus
- Matthew Rogers '70
Alumni Parent
Board of Consultants

Committee for Programs and Academic Excellence

- Sean Kavanagh '92
Social Studies Teacher
Committee Chair
- Joanne Cavera
Science Department Chair
- John Fogarty '81
Board of Consultants
- Roger Kintish
English Department Chair
- Thomas Krenn
Guidance Department Chair
- John Vreeland
Assistant Principal for Academics

Committee for Catholic Identity

- Ann Marie Brennan
Mathematics Teacher
Committee Chair
- Lesley Dinallo
Parent
- Brother John Dunning
Guidance Department
- Martin Gallagher '80
Alumni
Parent & Board of Consultants
- Joel Peters
Theology Department Chair
- Deacon Joseph Sisco
Campus Ministry Director
- David Stoto
Guidance Department

Committee for Integration of Technology

- Margaret Sullivan
Media Specialist
Committee Chair
- Todd Alderton '87
Alumnus
- Brendan Beatty '01
Alumnus
- William Brown '78
Board of Consultants
- Martha LoBianco
World Language Teacher
- Norman Myatt
Science Teacher
- Thomas Neumann
Board of Consultants Chair
- Thomas O'Byrne '80
Alumni Parent
- Frank Prior
Technology Director

Committee for Facilities and Activities

- Matthew Frasco '81
Board of Consultants, Committee Chair
- James Beattie
Board of Consultants
- Jan Czerepak
Director of Maintenance
- Anthony Karcich
Director of Athletics
- Robert Mackie
Dean of Students
- Michael Neglia '84
Parent
- David Williams '00
Alumnus