

St. Peter's Parish School Commission
High School and Junior High Report for Tuesday, September 15, 2009

1. We held our first-ever joint junior high and high school orientation for new students on Thursday, August 21. Parents of seventh and ninth graders both commented that they thought the day was helpful and a source of excitement for their kids.
2. During August faculty in-service days, we discussed changes in the academic master schedule. Factors that impacted the schedule include (1) the move to block scheduling for junior high, (2) the new trend for accelerated junior high students to take Foreign Language 1 and/or Algebra 1, (3) the necessary cost-saving measure of reducing staff, and (4) the Ohio Revised Code change that allows high school students to substitute two seasons of high school athletics for physical education classes. The absence of phys ed in the schedules of so many required the addition of a section of sociology and a section of personal finance. The fact that we now have several freshmen in sophomore courses (Foreign Language 2 and Geometry) along with the aforementioned phys ed change also sent a record number of freshmen into speech class.
3. As a part of the conversation referenced above, I listed for the teachers the students who would not be returning to St. Peter's and why. Theology teacher Mike Mulherin made an observation that spurred conversation. He pointed out that a number of our students who left were kids who struggled at St. Peter's but will shine in other situations. At the same time that this is happening we have more and more students who will give up phys ed, a non-homework course, only to replace it with a rigorous course that will add significantly to student homework load. While we pride ourselves in challenging students, we know that a number of our students are challenged to the degree that they want to attend other schools. They are working hard and feeling stressed. During this spell when money is tighter than usual for everyone, we are not surprised that some parents have chosen to send their children to a different school where their grades will be higher and they don't have to pay tuition. Several thoughts came up then and since. These kids are in a situation devoid of study halls. Frequently the schools they transfer to will place them in the same courses we had with a study hall where we had theology. That begs the study hall question. While we know that some students would never be interested in taking a study hall, for some it might be just the down time that they need to survive seven other very challenging classes. I would be interested in School Commission input regarding the availability of study halls. Of course, if there were study halls on the master schedule, they would not be required, just an option.
4. The first and second days of school began with assemblies. The first day's assembly was a prayer service. The second day's assembly was an explanation of procedures, rules, and regulations. The PowerPoint presentation used by Mr. Straub to support his explanation of the discipline program is the one we will use to guide our Information Night scheduled for Monday, September 28, 2009.
5. I am pleased that so many junior high students have already adjusted to block scheduling. The majority tell me that they like it. I have also received some unsolicited emails on the subject. One parent expressed how much better things are going for her student because he can stay organized with only four classes a day. On the flip side, two girls told me yesterday that block

means more homework and they, of course, were not thrilled with that. (It's not necessarily a given that block means more homework. Each teacher and course has different homework needs.)

6. The annual QSP magazine sale began today (Monday). Our QSP representative, Bob Meldahl did a great job of explaining why customers should buy from us instead of local stores. The price difference he described was significant. Students can sell face to face, using email, or using the Magnet letters via U.S. mail.
7. Our annual Come and See Us Day will be combined with the fall play matinee on Thursday, October 15. Thanks to Kathy Morris for communicating with our feeder schools to invite them for Mass, tours, lunch, and the play.
8. Thursday and Friday, October 8 and 9, are in-service days for teachers. Guest speakers will address our faculty on teaching multiple intelligences and on diversity training.
9. The Variety Show is the last Friday of the quarter, Friday, October 30.
10. We have two student teachers from OSU-M with us this term. Mr. Ed Kossick and Mr. Doug Picard are working toward dual certifications so they are being shared by at least two junior high teachers. My thanks to Leslie Nielsen, Bob Neumann, Krista Marshall, and Bob Keller for helping to mold new teachers!
11. Fifth Day Enrollment Report

Grade Level	Boys	Girls	Total
7	24	27	51
8	21	23	44
Junior High Totals	45	50	95
9	33	26	59
10	27	24	51
11	22	30	52
12	14	27	41
High School Totals	96	107	203
7 – 12 Totals	141	157	298