



THE WEEKLY

Warrior

THE PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

VOLUME V ISSUE II

August 4, 2023

Welcome to Orientation for New Students and Parents

We will welcome our 103, and growing, new students on **Thursday, August 10th at 8:15am**. Students should be dropped off at the athletic center starting at 8:00am. Following a brief welcome from administration and our annual House sorting, always an exciting feature of orientation, students will break into their House groups to begin building relationships with the students and teachers who will become their Housemates for their entire time at JPIL. Students will then follow their schedule for both blue and gold days to become acclimated with their classes and location. Dress is casual for orientation.

At 11:30am parents and siblings are welcome to join us back in the athletic center as we celebrate mass together for the first time. We call this a learning mass because Fr. Raphael spends time explaining what is taking place and the reason behind it. We realize many of our students may be attending a Catholic service for the first time, or perhaps for the first time in a long time, so we want to allow them to become comfortable before we celebrate mass altogether as a school the following Wednesday. Following mass we enjoy a cookout lunch with all new students, their families, our current student ambassadors, as well as faculty and staff. So if you can't join us for mass please come for lunch at 12:30. Pickup time is by 1:00pm in front of the school.

Schedule

Time	Event
• 8:00-8:15	Doors Open/Ice Breakers with SLC
• 8:15-9:00	Welcome and House Sorting
• 9:00-10:00	House Meetings
• 10:00-11:30	Bell Schedule with lunch
• 11:30	Learning Mass
• 12:30	Cookout
• 1:00	Dismissal

Orientation is for new students and families only. School for everyone begins August 14.

Final New Staff Hired at JP II

We are pleased to announce the final two hires at JP II. This now completes our hiring and I am pleased to announce we are fully staffed with 14 new teachers, 2 new bus drivers, and 1 new maintenance worker for the coming school year.

JoEllen Jacobs (Art) – Mrs. Jacobs brings over 10 years of experience teaching art. For the past 4 years she was the art teacher at M.C. Reilly Elementary School in Bluffton. Prior to that she spent several years teaching art in Illinois. She has a BFA in Graphic Design from Iowa State University and an M.Ed. from Benedictine University. An interesting fact about Mrs. Jacobs is she was once a student of Sr. Mary Beth so she comes highly recommended.

Jerry Lesage (Math) – Mr. Lesage will be teaching 6th and 7th grade math in addition to high school Algebra I. Mr. Lesage brings over 25 years of teaching math primarily at the middle school level across Michigan and Georgia. He has been a program coordinator for the International Baccalaureate / Middle Years Program. He also had a career in the corporate world working for Coca Cola in Atlanta. He is a graduate of Central Michigan University with a B.S. in Education and Mathematics as well as an M.A. in Teaching & Learning from Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Athletic Survey Results

This past June we sent a survey to all parents in an effort to receive feedback on our athletic program. With approximately 80% of our students participating in a sport at JP II, the athletic program is a critical component of the JP II experience. I am pleased to report that we had over 80 families respond which put us above the threshold of the minimum needed for validity. Thank you to all those who responded.

Mrs. Sanders, Mr. Gaylets, Mrs. Rembold, and myself have met and thoroughly analyzed the results. Every comment and suggestion was read and recorded. I will share a big picture review of the results; however all the feedback went into our recommendations and plans for this coming year.

It is clear that JP II athletics holds a very high reputation among our families, however the feedback from the survey indicated we have areas that definitely can be improved, and we pledge to make steps to address those specific areas.

The first item of note is in the demographics. Over one-third of the 84 total respondents were parents of 8th graders indicating a need to pay particular attention to our middle school sports.

Survey Results

Question	Positive/Good Agree/Yes	Neutral Fair	Negative/Poor Disagree/No
My overall experience with athletics at JPII has been	81%	10%	9%
Communication from the athletic department is generally	66%	17%	17%
The athletic department is big enough to meet the needs of its enrollment	57%	21%	22%
Parents should be allowed to coach their own child's team	60%	27%	13%
My child's coaches were adequately trained and equipped	75%	N/A	25%
Skill development was an important part of my child's experience	75%	N/A	25%
Did your child come away from their season with a sense of enjoyment/accomplishment	85%	N/A	15%
Did playing sports help in other areas of your child's life, such as school, well-being, etc.	87%	N/A	13%
Did you volunteer at any time during the past year with boosters, teams, driving, etc.	71%	6%	23%
Fan behavior at games when compared to other schools is better	95%	N/A	5%
There were members of the athletic department or admin team at my child's games	67%	16%	17%
I believe the athletic department puts my child's well-being above all else (winning, etc)	70%	16%	14%
How satisfied were you with the end of the year athletic banquet	46%	18%	36%

Athletic Program Improvement Plan

- 1. Improved Communication** – You can never communicate enough and as we grow the size of our program and the number of athletes participating, communication will become more and more important. The athletic department has already put out several email notices this summer. In pre-season coaches meetings we stressed the need for regular ongoing communication from coaches. We have hired someone as a sports information director with graphic design and social media skills. Look for a much improved product on our website and social media.
- 2. The need for a college recruiting forum** – While most high school athletes do not go on to play sports in college, we recognize it is the dream of many. We are planning to hold a recruiting forum where coaches from DI, DII and DIII programs could provide student-athletes and parents valuable insight into the process, and perhaps a dose of reality on what it takes to play at the next level.
- 3. The need for additional athletic opportunities** – While JPII already has a large athletic program for the size of the school, and the most offerings of any private school in our region, we recognize the need for growth of programs and facilities to allow as many students to participate in sports that want to. Recent player cuts in some sports, such as volleyball and basketball, present few options for students to pick up another sport. Adding a sport requires several steps to take before it actually can be offered (1) we need adequate playing fields and court space, both of which are in short supply, (2) we need to be able to find trained and competent coaches (not easy), (3) we need a sufficient number of participants, (4) we need to have other schools our size and close by to compete against, and (5) we need to be able to fund it without negatively impacting what we already offer. So as you can see, it's challenging to add more sports. With that said, we are trying. Suggestions of girls golf, skeet shooting, boys and girls lacrosse, boys volleyball, to name a few, have all been studied the past couple of years. Anyone of these are possible if the 5 steps above can be met. The recent addition of boys tennis last year is an example of what is possible.
- 4. Improved internal communication within the athletic department** – The sheer size of the JPII athletic department is impossible to manage for one person. We are fortunate to have two positions, a full-time athletic director and an assistant athletic director who also teaches P.E. classes. Despite busy schedules, we recognize the importance of a stronger team approach to managing the complexities of the department. Look for an increased sharing of the workload.

5. **Increased presence of both the administrative team and faculty at sporting events –** While not all of our sports are held on campus, the need for a JPII staff presence at all events is critical. The athletic directors should coach no more than one sport themselves, but unfortunately this year due to a late resignation in middle school football, it will make the fall season challenging. Look for an increased presence at games, particularly among the administrative team.

6. **End of year banquet will be revised –** We are working on a new format for the athletic banquet. While last year's followed similar formats as in the past, it is clear from the feedback that the banquet needs to change. More to come on this one.

We are pleased by both the overall number of responses and the generally positive responses we received. While understanding that not all experiences were positive, the only thing we can do is to take the feedback and pledge to try harder in those areas viewed by some as not positive. We read every comment and took them to heart. We also ask that parents understand and acknowledge this was the first year of our new athletic department administration and with any first year there are lessons to be learned. We appreciate your understanding and support as we work to make JPII athletics the best program in the area. I can guarantee one thing, nobody will outwork our athletic directors.

Play Like a Champion

We have also received some questions as to why our new program, Play Like a Champion, is mandatory for all athletes, parents and coaches. This program was ***not*** a response to the survey but rather has been in the works since last fall. We had heard positive results about the program from both Bishop England in Charleston and St. Joseph's in Greenville, so we decided to give it a try. Stephen Gaylets was trained this summer at Notre Dame and is certified to teach the program. However, for our kickoff event on August 19, we decided to invite one of the program administrators from Notre Dame to present to both parents and coaches. Why the mandatory requirement? It's because of the importance of 100% buy in to make it most effective. Both B.E. and St. Joe's, much larger schools, stressed the importance of making the training required. We realize the lives of parents are hectic so we will schedule another parent training for those who cannot make it on the 19th. Play Like a Champion is just one piece of a larger schoolwide focus on culture. We believe JPII is at its best when 100% of students, parents and staff are moving in unison towards the same goal.

From Campus Ministry

The 6th Grade Annual Retreat is scheduled for **Saturday, August 26th from 9:00AM to 12:00PM**, and we look forward to sharing this time with them! With DISCIPLESHIP as the anchor of our S.H.I.E.L.D. values, campus ministry focuses our mission on evangelizing our students. Retreats (except for the Senior Retreat) are led by our Acts29 Peer Ministry Team, who discern the needs of each class and uniquely tailor each retreat to tend to that grade level's spiritual and social needs. Our annual class retreats give our students the opportunity to trust in God's grace and discover who they are through peer witness, Scripture, and time to build and grow their relationships with one another and the Lord. The theme for this retreat is, "Community, Purpose, and Welcome", with the focus on continuing to welcome students to our community and familiarizing them with our campus. The morning will be filled with games, team building activities, an opportunity to get to know their new classmates and the Acts29 Peer Ministry Team, and of course, some good food.

Please note all staff will be on an off-campus retreat on Monday, August 7. School offices will be closed and reopen at 8:00am on Tuesday.

In His Purpose,



President

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