



VOLUME V ISSUE XXXVIII

May 17, 2024

JPII Submits First Balanced Budget in School History!

After eleven years of starting a Catholic secondary school for Beaufort and Jasper Counties, we have finally achieved a balanced operating budget for the first time in that short history. What that means is we are able to fully fund the cost of operating, including paying current principal and interest on debt. The Diocese of Charleston will no longer be required to subsidize the school. This is significant for two reasons. One, future tuition increases will now be directly related to increases in operating cost. While tuition can be expected to rise in the future, it will only increase tied to the cost to educate, and any future debt incurred. We will no longer need to increase tuition incrementally to close an operating deficit. Second, we are now in a position to borrow additional funds since we have demonstrated long-term financial viability.

Which brings me to the second point of good news. The Diocese has green lighted permission for the school to take up to an \$18,000,000 line of credit to build the Innovation Center. However, before we can access this line of credit, we must first reach \$8,500,000 in cash on hand as the downpayment on the loan. This will give us the funds needed to fully construct the Innovation Center and renovate the existing Dining Commons into a grab-n-go café. Currently we have a little over \$3,000,000 on hand raised through the capital campaign, so we have to raise another \$5,000,000. We will also need to reach a combined total of \$16,000,000 in cash and pledges so that the debt we are left with at the end of construction is \$10,000,000. While this may seem daunting to some, we all know this *has* to be done. There is no Plan B. For all those who have helped us reach \$3,000,000 so far, we thank you. We would never even be thinking this would become a reality without you. For all those who plan to contribute but haven't yet, the time is now. For those who know a difference maker somewhere out there, now is the time to bring them onboard. We are full STEAM ahead!

To answer the question *when will construction begin*, it is dependent on hitting the \$8.5 million target, final approval of the loan, and permitting from Jasper County. The latter is already in motion and expected by Summer. Choate is ready to mobilize as soon as the funds are available. Our best estimate is sometime this Fall. Construction is expected to take between 16 – 18 months. Therefore, occupancy will likely occur sometime in 2026 depending on the start date. A little behind the original goal, but not by much.



I plead with you--never, ever give up on hope, never doubt, never tire, and never become discouraged. Be not afraid. Saint John Paul II

Vote for JP II as the Best School in the Lowcountry

For two years in a row JP II has secured the ranking as the Best middle school and high school, but somehow were beat out for BEST private school last year as we finished 2nd. How did that happen? We were just outvoted, it's that simple. So, it's time to start gearing up for the **BEST** campaign yet. **Voting begins on Monday, June 3 and lasts until Friday, June 21.** Each person can vote daily. Every student, staff member, parent, grandparent, relative, friend, and neighbor must pay attention and VOTE each and every day. The school will send regular reminders for you to vote, however it's up to every JP II family to spread the news far and wide to **vote daily**. Mark your calendars!

This is an important part of our marketing campaign each year and it starts now. We have purchased the prestigious inside cover to spread the good news about our school. Now it's up to you to do the rest.

If you don't do so already, please be sure to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. We currently have 971 "followers" on Instagram. HHCA, by comparison, has 2,751. They have 251 followers on LinkedIn, JP II has 24. Let's GO WARRIORS.

We will soon be announcing our new staff through social media. So, share the good news about JP II and grow our followers.

Admissions Update

It's been awhile since I've updated our community on Admissions. We are still projecting a record enrollment exceeding 400 students, perhaps as high as 420.

Retention is running above 92% (303) and could hit a record of 94% (308) if a few more students in limbo re-enroll. Only 14 students out of a possible 328 have withdrawn. This is exceptional retention and demonstrates a high degree of student and parent satisfaction with their JPPI experience.

As for new students, 87 have enrolled to date with another 8 in process. We are 6 students ahead of last year's pace when we enrolled a total of 126 new students, including those who came after the school year began. The previous year we enrolled 127 so its logical to predict a similar result. This is why we are projecting up to 420. Tours continue almost every day now and throughout the Summer months.

As for where our new students are coming from, below represent the top five feeders.

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| 1. St. Gregory the Great | 20 |
| 2. Holy Trinity | 15* |
| 3. St. Peters | 13 |
| 4. St. Francis | 12 |
| 5. Local Public Schools | 10 |

*22 students have enrolled in total from other local private schools. This brings us to almost 70 in the past three years. A testament to JPPI's stellar academic program.

A waiting list is beginning to form for 6th grade and 8th grade is approaching 80 students making it the largest JPPI class ever. The future growth projection is rapidly multiplying, and space will soon be at a premium.

We Have a Few Employment Openings for Next Year

We have nine excellent new teachers planning to join JPPI for next year and we are very excited to announce the lineup as soon as contracts become finalized. We still have a few openings we are searching to fill.

- Middle School Science Teacher
- Middle School English Teacher
- Food Service Manger (TBD)

If you, or perhaps someone you know, would make an excellent addition to our team please contact me at john.mccarthy@johnpaul2school.org. Positions are open until filled.

Have a great weekend.

In His Purpose,

John E McCarthy
President