

## From the Desk of Dr. Jahna Duda



The 2023-2026 Strategic Plan includes four initiatives tied to people, programs, and property. As we begin to implement the plan we have spent the last year formulating, I am pleased with the progress being made in this first quarter. I am meeting with focus groups this quarter to listen to constituent feedback and discern if our efforts are on the right track. The success of our strategic plan hinges on the ability to keep the plan alive and amend specific action steps to ensure the intent and heart behind the initiative is achieved.

The updates below are intended to give you a glimpse into the great work happening at the faculty, administrative, and board levels so you can have confidence in our stewardship of your most valuable possessions (your child and your finances). It has been a joy to see the plan begin to unfold and bring us together in a unified vision

toward the RC we desire for the future.

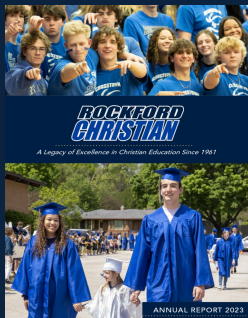
In Him,  
Dr. Jahna Duda



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## SP1 ~ Advance a Cohesive Culture

Various teams have begun implementing ideas tied to the first initiative of our strategic plan which focuses on our community and the desire to enhance the student, faculty, and parent experiences at Rockford Christian.



You will notice a new look and format to our campus newsletters to streamline communication and make it easier for you to scroll to important sections first, and return to read remaining updates later. We implemented our updated branding with a clean, concise, and intentional approach to highlight God's story at Rockford Christian. In addition, we created an [annual report](#) to highlight the 2022-2023 school year for our community and provide a publication where you can easily share the story of Rockford Christian with your friends and family.

## SP2 ~ Enhancing Faculty & Staff Well-Being

We started this initiative with updates to our inservice model based on the Flourishing Schools Research from ACSI that says professional learning communities promote educator flourishing, or well-being. Inservice now includes a series of professional learning communities focused on a particular topic and facilitated by a peer.

For example, one of our school goals was to implement the revised student support framework with fidelity so we pulled in our resident experts who have been trained specifically in the areas of disability, trauma informed instruction, and executive functioning skills to lead faculty conversation and learning. The initial feedback has been positive, and we intend to continue this model with future school improvement goals.

While pouring into our current faculty, we also continue to think about the faculty who might join us in the future. Our Head of Recruitment recently spent time at Northern Illinois University and Wheaton College networking with graduating seniors. 55 brochures and 10 applications were taken by interested students. Additional recruitment opportunities are scheduled through the coming weeks, as she connects with future Royal Lion faculty and staff.



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## SP3 ~ Enriching Mission-Focused Programming

Rockford Christian School implemented a formal curriculum review cycle in the 2022-2023 school year, beginning with math. Through the review process, it was determined that new resources were needed so we purchased over \$40,000 worth of new materials for grades K-8. In a recent update, Math Department Chair Sally Bradley writes, "The new curriculum is more rigorous and requires a deeper level of thinking from our students but they are responding by putting more effort into their daily work, asking more questions, and actively engaging in the lessons. There have been many benefits of the new materials because it brings far more resources and digital support for students and teachers." Our academic program review continued this year with PreK-12 social studies. A team of faculty will spend this year analyzing our goals for social studies and history, examine our written standards, and if needed, select new materials for next fall.

In addition to academics, the athletic department implemented a new end-of-season survey for middle and high school students and parents to offer feedback about competitive programs. Results will be reviewed with head coaches and used to establish goals for the following season on how the student athlete experience can grow into the future.

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## SP4 ~ Ensuring Long-Term Financial Viability

Several subcommittees of the Board are tackling this last initiative. Focused on wise stewardship and long-term viability, the committees are addressing facility needs, financial strategies, and giving opportunities to ensure the legacy of excellent Christian education at RC, which started in 1961, continues well into the future.

The Campus Planning Committee, chaired by board member Roxanne Sosnowski, has partnered with Matt Nyberg, Isaiah Johnson, Erik Hawkinson, Don Carter, and myself to create a facilities heat map that lists each facility, technological, and athletic asset so we can intentionally plan for preventative maintenance and/or replacement in the future.

The Finance Committee, chaired by board member Mark Kneller, has partnered with board members Gary Love, Maribeth Speckman, Dave Stanfield as well as Head of Finance Kim Orr to tackle conversations about strategies for compensation, debt, tuition assistance, and revenue that ensures RC remains financially solvent. The months of October through December are heavy in analyses needed to prepare a balanced budget for the following school year. Any changes to revenue or expenses will be approved by the board in January and communicated to families in February.

The Advancement Committee, chaired by board member Roxanne Sosnowski, has partnered with Dr. Eric Fulcomer, Representative Joe Sosnowski as well as Head of Advancement Cheri Smith to develop opportunities to grow a culture of generosity that ensures the school remains accessible to families in Northwestern Illinois.



## Thank You!

Thank you for attending fall conferences and continuing your partnership with us to raise children who love and serve Jesus Christ and live on purpose for Him. Conferences are a wonderful opportunity for parents to hear and know the heartbeat of our faculty. To have someone pray over your child or describe them in a way that demonstrates they care about them and know them deeply is invaluable.

## RC Parent University

Rockford Christian School is excited to announce the launch of “Parent University”, a series of educational topics and discussions relevant for today’s parents who are raising the next generation of Christian thought-leaders and world changers.

Join us for our first RC Parent University, “Break Free of the Overparenting Trap and Prepare Your Kid for Success,” at **6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 8** in the Distance Learning Auditorium located at the Upper School.

Bring your church small group or neighbors to hear from Dr. Duda and other community leaders as they highlight ways in which overparenting harms children, you as parents, and society at large. You will learn tips and strategies on breaking free from the trap and preparing your child or teen for success.



## CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to all our fall athletes who completed their seasons! We are proud of your dedication, and the way you glorified the Lord through your performance.

Best wishes to our cross country and volleyball teams who continue their post-season competition. Go, Royal Lions!

- The cross country team continues at sectionals today at Oregon Park West, with the



girls competing at 10:00 a.m. and boys at 11:00 a.m.

- The volleyball team plays Timothy Christian in the sectional finals at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, October 30 at Genoa-Kingston.



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