

The ups and downs of e-learning

P.J. Cunningham
Angel Ortiz Jr.
 junior reporters

When the coronavirus pandemic forced the administration to adopt an e-learning schedule on March 23 in compliance with state school closure orders, the entire school community was plunged into uncertainty.

No one knew exactly what would happen, or how the education process would be affected by the pandemic.

During e-learning, periods 1-4 meet on Mondays and Thursdays, while periods 5-7 meet on Tuesdays and Fridays. Classes often meet on the Zoom video conferencing platform for 65 minutes, with 20-minute breaks in between classes.

Wednesdays are days for faculty to meet in departments to catch up on planning and grading while also giving students a chance to do homework/projects and rest. The last period on Tuesdays and Fridays is the "R" period, a time for teachers to be available online to help students.

Now, almost two months later and as the year winds down, students, teachers, parents and administrators are more familiar and comfortable with the process.

As with any new approach in education, students, parents, teachers and administrators recognize that the transition to e-learning included its own ups and downs.

Students weigh in on the new experience of e-learning

Some students, including junior Troy Ohlrich, feel that there are drawbacks to doing all the learning and homework from home.

"E-learning does have its benefits, like the ability to learn comfortably from one's own home, but at the same time it's even easier to get distracted at home than it is in class at school," Ohlrich said. "You also have to be patient while waiting for help from teachers because they have their own distractions at home and can't always respond immediately like they can during class."

Many students have struggled to adapt to the limitations of online connections with their friends, classmates, teammates and teachers. Seniors in particular have found it hard not to be at school in person during these final weeks before graduation, but many are grateful that they could finish through e-learning.

"It is obviously a shame not being able to be present in school with all of my teachers and friends," senior Katie Giltmier said. "But the silver lining is that I've been managing my time better and have been able to keep up with my classes and work pretty well."

Teachers rise to meet the challenge of serving their students

As classes have met virtually on Zoom since March 23, teachers have been working with entire classes, small groups and individual students. Many educators agree that while e-learning is a good alternative, it cannot match the effectiveness of the physical presence of teachers and students working together

in the classroom. Nevertheless, the faculty has worked hard to make the best of e-learning for students as well as for themselves.

"E-learning is better than no learning and I think it offers students more flexibility with their time management and allows them to work at their own pace," social justice teacher Jan Martea said. "But there are some cons. For example, many students who already struggle with motivation to complete assignments will have even less. A virtual classroom is a great short-term option, but I wait eagerly for the day I can walk back into my classroom and see so many bright and talented faces."

At the same time, teachers point out that the experience students gained during e-learning during these final weeks of the second semester will help better prepare them for online classes in college.

"I would say a big advantage is that it gives students an opportunity to see what at home learning is like because some college classes are totally online," religion teacher Joe O'Brien said. "It will prove a good opportunity to see what some of their future classes might look like."

Administrators lament the loss of our regular environment

Upperclassmen Dean of Academics Thomas Gouterman agrees with O'Brien, but he and the administration also lament the effects of social distancing on interpersonal connections and they miss the buzz of the school environment.

"E-learning at Marist is wonderful practice for students as they prepare for the transition to online college coursework," Gouterman said. "Working remotely allows us to continue learning, but it has made it very difficult to experience that same sense of community we have. Personally, I miss the positive energy associated with interacting with our students and teachers."

Director of Curriculum Dr. Kathryn Baal, who was announced as the new principal on the eve of school closure, played an important role in managing the transition and implementation of e-learning. Baal, who will officially start as principal on July 1, is relieved that students are still able to learn by using technology during this crisis.

"The greatest benefit of remote learning is that learning is able to continue and school did not come to a screeching halt in March," Baal said. "Technology has become a tool that allows us to communicate from remote places and to be together virtually."

Baal notes that securing or expanding the appropriate technology required the administration to act quickly to ensure a successful transition.

"The investment Marist made this year in the Canvas and Zoom platforms have been critical to the e-learning process," Baal said. "Without these two systems and our social media platforms, our community could have suffered more, as these tools have enabled us to connect and communicate with each other virtually, maintain ongoing student engagement, provide social and emotional support platforms and bring continuity to the learning process."



photo by John Goczy

The editorial board meets on Friday, May 8 to finalize stories for this issue of the newspaper. All classes transitioned to e-learning on March 23, meeting on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays on the Zoom video conferencing platform.

Parents share gratitude, concerns

Parents have not been immune to the recent changes either. As important members of the school community, they also continue to assess the pros and cons of e-learning.

"I worry that e-learning is less personal, especially for diverse learners," Leah Lacey, mother of junior Max Lacey, said. "It has, however, been nice having a workload that's slightly less and more flexible."

Jennifer Beeson, mother of freshman Abby, junior Jack and senior Francis, shares Lacey's concerns.

"I think everyone will be a bit behind without the full, in-person learning experience," Beeson said. "I'm grateful however, that there is a set schedule with everything so everyone has a routine, you can work at your own pace, and there are no pressures with other activities."

Some members of our community have a unique perspective because they teach and have children attending school here.

"It has been great to see my kids have structure throughout the week," math teacher Sean Maxwell, father of Grace, a senior, and Patrick, a sophomore, said. "My wife and I are happy that our kids are continuing to learn and keeping busy. I feel that it has been very important to their emotional health to be able to see and communicate with their teachers and friends in their virtual classrooms. We are also happy that our school's strong academic reputation has held up throughout this pandemic."

Maxwell's colleague, Mary Barry, mother of senior Brendan, is equally pleased, in spite of the obvious challenges e-learning presents.

"As a parent, I am pleased with the efforts the teachers have made to keep learning consistent and of value," Barry said. "I like that we have scheduled times for classes, holding students accountable

to attend and participate. Keeping students connected with their classmates and teachers via Zoom sessions has been really important in helping give a sense of normalcy and community. The curriculum may not be as full for the fourth quarter as it would have been if we were physically in school, but the teachers have put in so much work to prioritize what is being presented in order to prepare our students as best they can for their future academic work."

Only time will tell what the long-term effects of the switch to e-learning will have on students. As we wait for the day that we can return to our campus, one thing remains certain: E-learning has allowed our community to maintain two constants during the uncertain and stressful time of this pandemic. We maintained our education and, more importantly, we maintained our RedHawk community.

In this issue

Senior journalists bid farewell to their fellow RedHawks
 page 2

The top four seniors of the Class of 2020 and A fond farewell to Nurse Sue Gardner
 page 3

The Class of 2020 senior superlatives
 page 4

THE SENTINEL



THE 2019-2020 EDITORIAL BOARD

PJ CUNNINGHAM

ELIZABETH DELEHANTY

CECELIA GIBBONS

GRACE MOLENHOUSE

ANGEL ORTIZ, JR.

ISABELLA SCHRECK

BROTHER HANK
HAMMER, F.M.S.
PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

MR. LARRY TUCKER
PRINCIPAL

MR. JOHN J. GONCZY, CJE
FACULTY ADVISER

The *Sentinel* is the official student publication of Marist High School, Chicago, published monthly August through May by the students of Marist High School. The opinions expressed in the *Sentinel* are those of the author and not necessarily those of the *Sentinel* staff or Marist High School, unless otherwise noted.

As an open forum, the *Sentinel* welcomes and encourages letters to the editor and guest editorials. Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less and must be signed by the author. Guest editorials are limited to 500 words and must also be signed by the author.

The *Sentinel* reserves the right to deny a letter publication if it is morally or ethically offensive, contains unsubstantiated claims or personal attacks. The *Sentinel* also reserves the right to edit letters and guest editorials for space or clarity. Letters may be sent to the *Sentinel* Editorial Board, 4200 W. 115th Street, Chicago, IL 60655 or may be dropped off in room 126. Letters must be received by the first school day of the calendar month if they are to be considered for publication in that month's issue.

In the event the *Sentinel* makes an error, a correction or retraction will be published in the following issue.

The *Sentinel* is published by Southwest Regional Publishing, 12247 S. Harlem Ave., Palos Heights, IL 60463.

Those clichés they tell you are true

Before my first day of freshman year, I told my parents that I did not want to hear the "Make the most of it! Time flies!" clichés. Looking back, I realize those clichés are true.

There were a lot of moments that I said "I wish high school would go by sooner like everyone said it would," and now, at the end of my senior year, I don't regret saying that.

The reason for this is Marist gave me exactly what I needed-experiences, love, heartbreak, laughter, tears, joy, sadness and so much more.

Your high school experience is based on the people you surround yourself with. Like everyone, I have had my ups and downs, but the people who supported me made sure I came out of my positive and negative experiences for the better.

My journey would not have been the same without my favorite religion teacher, Mrs. Greenan, who counseled me spiritually and sometimes emotionally, and never judged me for my beliefs.

My best friend, Maggie Butterfield, who I met in freshman year biology and who has filled my life with laughter and joy.



Elizabeth Delehanty

Many members of the guidance department who have guided me through emotional times, sad and happy, and who have always been friendly faces to me during the last four years.

My journalism family, from the girls I started with my sophomore year (The OG Gonczy Gang) to the juniors I have mentored in my time as editor-in-chief. And for my all-time favorite adviser, mentor and teacher, Mr. Gonczy, who has guided me, been a friend to me and who has always kept me laughing for the past three years.

All of these people have filled my Marist experience with joy and love, and they have shown me what it means to be true brothers, sisters and friends for life.

Most importantly my Marist family taught me about love. The difference between real and fake love. How to love and how to be loved.

To love and be loved is the fundamental core of Jesus' and Marcellin Champagnat's teachings. The majority of my brothers and sisters, mentors and teachers, always let it be known that I had an army standing behind me. Jesus and St. Marcellin would be proud of what they saw if they walked through the RedHawk halls today.

As I prepare for my future at the University of Illinois at Chicago, I will take all the knowledge, lessons, friendships, bonds and memories Marist has given me.

The last four years as a RedHawk has shaped the person who I am today. Being a RedHawk means to love, to fight, to be bold, brave and bright, to be honest, to be proud and to be selfless.

I am RedHawk Elizabeth Delehanty, member of the (quarantined) Class of 2020, and this is my farewell.



Leaving during lock down

I've waited the past three years to write my senior farewell column. I always thought I would know exactly what to say, but now, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, I am at a loss for words.

This was never how I expected my senior year of high school to end. When I think back to elementary school, middle school and high school, I reflect on the countless number of times I thought about graduation. While a virtual graduation is not ideal, the Class of 2020 will be able to say that we have had the most unique send-off in history. Marist has provided me with so many wonderful memories, and these final months of senior year only add to that list.

When I think back to walking into Marist as a student for the first time, I never imagined my life would be what it is today. I have chosen a career path and a college, and I am hopeful for the future. At the same time, I realize how much I will miss high school. This lock down has shown me



Cecelia Gibbons

that I value time spent in the classroom, surrounded by teachers and friends. I genuinely miss seeing my friends every day, that is definitely something I took for granted.

When I was a freshman, I remember debating whether or not I should try out for the fall play. I am so grateful I did. Throughout my four years in the theatre guild, I met amazingly talented people and was blessed to share the stage with them.

As a sophomore, I joined the journalism program and this is the class I have grown the most in. I found my voice, transforming from the girl who was too shy to raise her hand to editor-in-chief. I will never forget the journalism conventions in San Francisco and Chicago. I am especially grateful for Mr. Gonczy, who always does a great job dealing with all of his students.

My junior year I joined the speech team. If someone were to tell me that I would wake up at 5 a.m. every Saturday to compete for roughly 12 hours, I would have said they were crazy. However, I slowly found myself appreciating the experience and the skills I learned.

To all current and future students: cherish your time with your friends and teachers. You never know when a pandemic will come along and change everyone's lives forever. High school is unlike any other time in your life. At times it may be tough, but at the end of the day you will always be proud to call yourself a RedHawk.

Meet the class of 2020's top four seniors

Grace Molenhouse
junior reporter



Connor McNamara

A graduate of St. Michael School in Orland Park, McNamara chose Marist because "I knew about the math team and it was really something I wanted to be a part of. I also had an older brother who went to Marist and, after shadowing him, I knew I would belong here."

McNamara will attend the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign to major in computer science.

"Looking back, I have grown so much as a student and a person in so many different ways over the past four years," he said. "I owe that to all the teachers and classmates who helped me through the challenges of high school. They taught me to persevere and work hard for my goals. I am so grateful to them and everyone who has helped me during these past four years. I know I am ready for any challenge that college will bring me."

His advice to younger and future RedHawks:

"Take advantage of the many opportunities high school gives you. Get involved and don't be afraid to try new things. At the same time, don't constantly stress about your grades and grade-point average. Your time in high school flies by, so make the most of it while you can. Live your life and have some fun."



Jack Molenhouse

A graduate of Mount Greenwood Elementary School, Molenhouse decided to attend Marist after shadowing one time in eighth grade. "It just felt like a home to me and I felt I would have a more promising future as a RedHawk because of the strength of Marist's academic program."

Molenhouse will attend Texas A&M University in the fall to major in aerospace engineering.

"The rigorous academics at Marist allowed me to develop a strong work ethic, which helped me to perform well in all of my classes," he said. "This conscientiousness, along with the virtues of kindness, compassion and patience will allow me to be successful in all my future endeavors."

His advice to younger and future RedHawks:

"During the rest of your time at Marist, you will surely be faced with daunting challenges you think you will not be able to handle. Each of you is brighter than you think and, if you put all of your effort into it, you will surely accomplish anything you put your mind to. Make sure you treasure your time at Marist because you don't know when and if it will be cut short, as we have seen this semester."



Zach Stack

Stack decided to come to Marist because his father is an alumnus of the class of 1984. "At an early age, Marist's culture was ingrained in me as I attended football games and other sporting events," he said. "After shadowing during seventh and eighth grade, I knew Marist was the right place and the right home for me educationally and socially."

Stack will attend Notre Dame in the fall to major in finance and business analytics at the Mendoza School of Business.

"Through the completion of many hours of homework and numerous demanding classes, Marist has prepared me academically for my next journey and ingrained a number of valuable life lessons. I have learned how to lead on a team, to persevere when times get stressful and tough, to explore subjects and topics that interest me and to grow in my faith."

His advice to younger and future RedHawks:

"Chase your dreams and take the rewarding path. Do not shy away from difficult classes and decisions. Attack them and challenge yourself. Nothing in life is easy, but the rewards of conquering your struggles are more than worth it."



Nicole Viz

Viz's father and two older sisters attended Marist, so she naturally followed. "I knew it was the best choice for me academically, especially for math," she said. "I shadowed my sister and had so much fun and really liked the environment. I also took Mr. Maxwell's morning math class during eighth grade and had such a good experience."

Viz will attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is interested in either mechanical or electrical engineering. She also intends to stay involved with either a chorus or theater group in college.

"My classes here were very rigorous and my teachers were amazing, not only with explaining material but also teaching me life skills and providing a serious but supportive environment in and out of the classroom," she said. "I'm thankful for the Catholic education I received here because it helped me strengthen my relationship with God."

Her advice to younger and future RedHawks:

"Work hard, do your best and take advantage of the resources and opportunities available here. Do not take anything for granted. Realize that every day at Marist is a blessing and remember to pray for each other."

Congratulations RedHawk Class of 2020!

A fond farewell to a great and dedicated school nurse

Isabella Schreck
junior reporter

As school nurse, Sue Gardner has dealt with it all, from minor headaches and sprains to major breaks and the flu.

After 14 years of serving students, faculty and staff, Gardner will retire at the end of this school year.

Her decision to pursue a nursing career came in high school, with her father's encouragement.

"I was always interested in science and helping people," Gardner said. "My junior year, my father said I would make a good nurse, so after I graduated from Queen of Peace, I went on to get a bachelor's degree in nursing from St. Xavier University."

After college, Gardner worked at Christ Hospital, substituted for nurses in Evergreen Park schools and then became a visiting nurse at a convent for retired nuns.

As her four children began attending Marist, Gardner connected with the school nurse and became her substitute.

"I recognized the St. Xavier nursing program pin the previous nurse was wearing at a volunteer event," Gardner said. "We began talking and she asked me if I would like to substitute for her. I never would have guessed that I would have ended up here, but so many things in my life have been because I was in the right place at the right time."

Gardner became the official school nurse in 2006.

"Sue Gardner has that insatiable desire to care for others," principal Larry Tucker said. "For years she has gone above and beyond; she can be seen running through the hallways—sometimes with a wheelchair—dealing with a student health problem, keeping faculty members healthy and providing professional development for faculty members on how to care for students. She will be missed."



Sue Gardner

Originally, Gardner planned to retire last summer after being diagnosed with breast cancer. Now cancer free, Gardner remains grateful for the strong support of students and coworkers, the bonds she formed with nurses from neighboring high schools, and even the stresses of the day-to-day life in her office.

"I'm glad I didn't resign last year because now I'm going out on my terms," Gardner said. "I still have a lot of living to do."

As a result of her care and expertise, school president Br. Hank Hammer notes that Gardner became a companion to many students and helped to make them better people.

"Mrs. Gardner knows more Marist students by name than anyone in the school," Br. Hank said. "She is calm and patient with all, and she can be compassionately challenging when she has to be."

While she is unable to make her farewell in person due to the ongoing pandemic, Gardner intends to continue to see familiar faces and connect with new students for years to come.

"I work with and for the best people and, although I'm leaving, I plan on being on the substitute list as nurse or even as a teacher," Gardner said. "So this is not goodbye, it's see you later."



best personality (male)

Caleb Davis

**You voted.
We tabulated.
Congratulations Class of 2020!
Here are your choices for this year's
"MOST LIKELY TO" and "BEST IN CLASS"
AWARDS**



best personality (female)

Abby Ruzevich



best smile (male)

AJ Markett



best smile (female)

Julia Mooncotch



class clown (male)

Billy Curtin



class clown (female)

Jenna Ryan



worst driver

Moira McGuire



couple most likely to get married

Amanda Tracy and Thomas Leonard



most likely to become famous on Tik Tok

Noah Holifield



most likely to be a contestant on the Bachelor

Victoria Georgelos



most likely to be a contestant on the Bachelorette

Colin Bohanek



most likely to become your boss

Zach Stack



most likely to find the cure for COVID-19

Jack Molenhouse



most likely to work at Marist

Brigid Englehart



most likely to never leave the South Side

Meghan Hosty



most likely to marry for money

Olivia Bridgeman



most likely to get carded at age 30

Quinn Kelly



biggest flirt (male)

Jack Christie



biggest flirt (female)

Abbey Siegel



biggest gossip (male)

Mike Dwyer



biggest gossip (female)

Gabby Murphy