

Good morning SJS families,

As you know, we have been searching unsuccessfully for a Spanish teacher for some time. Many of you also know that our search last year turned up a less than ideal product that caused issues with Spanish class throughout the year. After a lot of reflection and conversations, we have decided to move forward with Rosetta Stone as a Spanish curriculum for next year. In the end, our priority was to keep Spanish as a part of our curriculum, and this seems to be the best option. There are some positives and negatives about Rosetta Stone that I will lay out.

St. John School will purchase a whole school license to Rosetta Stone. This gives every student access to the program (all languages) for 12 months. This will allow us to expand Spanish class down to prekindergarten, giving those students five specials.

Spanish class will now be done online. Students will continue to go to the library for Spanish class. They will utilize either a Chromebook or an iPad to access Rosetta Stone with wired headphones that have a mic attached (SJS will furnish these). Students will progress through Rosetta Stone at their own pace. Lessons tend to be between 5 and 7 minutes and they will do multiple lessons in one sitting. The recommendation from Rosetta Stone is to start every student at their introduction level, which we will do. This will introduce younger students to new content and review some of what they have already learned. Older students will receive quite a bit of review the beginning of the school year, but they will progress quickly into new content. Rosetta Stone has a much deeper concentration on spoken language, so this will be a shift that needs to start from a common baseline.

In class, we will have a proctor, not a Spanish teacher. The proctor will be there more to support technical issues, get students started, and ensure they are on task. Since students are online and progressing at their own pace, there will be limited student-student and student-proctor interactions in class.

For Grades 5 and below we will keep the OSN grading scale. My guess is that most students will end at an S unless they refuse to progress in the program. For Grade 6 – 8 we will determine grading sometime in the first few weeks of school. My guess is that we will move to an OSN grading scale where students would need to

progress at a determined pace. There are assessments at the end of units, and we will see how those work and whether to utilize them for grading purposes.

Some positives of Rosetta Stone at SJS

- Rosetta Stone is a proven program for learning Spanish both for adults and students, particularly in its teaching of the spoken language. It is currently used in numerous schools, including some Catholic elementary schools in the Archdiocese of Boston. I have spoken to a few of these schools, and they are generally happy with the product.

- Students will have access to Rosetta Stone at home throughout the entire year. They can access it if they would like to progress faster and/or use it during next summer.

- We will expand Spanish to prekindergarten.

- Rosetta Stone does not require a Spanish teacher.

The negatives of Rosetta Stone at SJS

- We will not have a teacher in the classroom who has a deep understanding of Spanish.

- There will be limited to no student-student interaction during class.

- The curriculum is 100% online which requires the use of a device.

With this change, we are now looking for a two day a week Spanish proctor. This person needs no experience in Spanish, but some knowledge in technology troubleshooting would be helpful. If you are interested or have any leads, please let me know.

As usual, I am available to answer any questions you may have.

Chris