

# PARENTS AS PARTNERS



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*"Not only hearers, but doers of the Word..." James 1:22*

# **IN' – TRO – DUC' – TION**

n., a preface, a preliminary guide

**You, as parents, are guiding your daughter/son toward an important decision. At Bishop Connolly, we view this decision process as a partnership. Partnership is defined as a state of being with another in a joint venture, or put simply, participation in your daughter's/son's education.**

**Because education is a vehicle for growth that enables an individual to move forward into a career and into life itself, the choices about this education must be made carefully. Parents play a major role not only in the selection process also in its subsequent formative success. At Bishop Connolly, your participation is valued and encouraged.**

**This booklet will assist you by focusing your attention on the following key elements, which influence the quality of education:**

- ❖ **Mission**
- ❖ **Community**
- ❖ **Academic Excellence**
- ❖ **Education of the whole person**
- ❖ **Service**
- ❖ **Success**
- ❖ **Parents as Partners**
- ❖ **Important skills**
- ❖ **Self-Esteem**
- ❖ **Individuality**
- ❖ **Investment**

**Schools and parents working hand in hand can achieve the most important educational goal: guiding each student to the realization of their own personal development. To lead students to grow and to flourish in every aspect is the hallmark of truly excellent education.**

# MISSION

n., an assignment to be carried out: task

## What is the mission of Bishop Connolly High School?

Rooted in the teaching of Jesus Christ, Bishop Connolly High School supports and develops students holistically “to be not only hearers but doers of the word”.

### *Beliefs of Bishop Connolly High School*

*We believe that:*

- *All students can come to know and have a personal experience with Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church.*
- *All students can learn provided they are given the appropriate contextual support.*
- *Critical thinking can be taught and nurtured.*
- *All students learn best in an environment that is safe, secure and accountable.*
- *A Catholic, holistic approach to education facilitates the development of life long learners who become moral leaders in a secular world.*
- *All families are a vital component of the school community.*

# COM – MU’- NI- TY

n., a group whose members share values and actively participate in an interaction network

**Which group makes up the Bishop Connolly community?**

- **The Jesuits originally staffed the school, when it opened in 1966 as a school for young men. The Brothers of Christian Instruction came in 1970 after losing Prevoist High School in a serious fire. Both religious communities brought with them a tradition of excellence. In 1980 the school became co-ed as a successor to Bishop Gerard High School.**
- **Students who are diverse – intellectually, ethically, personally yet who share common values and respect for one another. Our students come to us from parish and public schools in Fall River as well as from 30 cities and towns in an extensive geographical area-covering southeaster Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Hispanic, Asian American, Black, European and South American students number among the 425 students who compose our student body. Several religious traditions are represented among our students thus enriching our diverse community.**
- **Faculty and staff who bring a wealth of different experiences and talents fortified by a rich commitment to Catholic education. A faculty of 35 members, 3 with doctoral degrees, 20 with Master’s degrees and 20 with Bachelor’s degrees and all of who uphold Bishop Connolly’s Mission provide a wide variety of academic expertise and co curricular interests. There are 3 Brothers of Christian Instruction and a Diocesan Priest who serves as Chaplin to the school. Faculty members coach sports, moderate clubs, service organizations and campus ministry.**
- **Alumnae who guarantee Bishop Connolly’s future by supporting and strengthening its present. Bishop Connolly graduates are involved in a variety of careers throughout the United States. The alumnae serve Bishop Connolly through their own association, which contributes financial resources annual in funds for financial aid.**
- **Parent’s whose ideas, interest, and involvement encourage harmony and balance within the larger dimension of the Bishop Connolly family. Parents are in frequent contact with teachers through progress reports, report cards, conferences, telephone calls and parent evenings regarding their daughter’s/son’s progress. A newly formed Parent Group is active in a variety of school related activities.**

# **AC'–A– DEM'–IC EX'–CEL–LENCE**

n., scholastic tradition of great worth

**What do we at Bishop Connolly mean by academic excellence?**

- **The school is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Independent Schools**
- **The curriculum focuses on preparing students for college and life-long learning.**
- **Each student develops moral values. A commitment to her or his community and an informed sense of direction in her or his life.**
- **A Bishop Connolly education prepares students for the complexities of life, preparing them to think for themselves and to make their own decisions in their personal, religious, social and business lives.**
- **We instill a curiosity and a thirst for knowledge and a desire to do something, be it big or small, not just for themselves but also for all of human kind.**
- **We prepare our students for the most academically challenging future of which they are capable. Extensive honors and advanced placement offerings encourage students to develop special talents, deepen their faith and knowledge and prepare for selective schools.**
- **Honors and Advanced Placement courses in English, Mathematics, Science, History, World Languages, Art, Religion and Computer.**
- **The Mathematics team participates in monthly contests with area school.**
- **Enrichment opportunities are offered to students at area colleges.**
- **Over 92% of graduating seniors are enrolled in four-year college.**
- **Students recognized by Universities and Colleges with significant scholarship offers.**
- **Many faculty members continue their education through graduate studies, workshops, travel and involvement in national associations.**
- **Recent research confirms that Catholic schools are doing more with less and that the ideal learning environment is one in which a student feels comfortable, loved and secure, as well as intellectually stimulate. That is something that we at Bishop Connolly have always felt in our hearts and a goal toward which we strive.**

# **WHOLE PER'-SON**

**n., one who is complete and balanced; one who knows and appreciates the many facets of their personality and life itself**

**How does Bishop Connolly promote each young woman's and young man's growth as a whole person?**

## **SPIRITUALLY**

**Religious formation is the central focus at Bishop Connolly. The religion department's four-year program incorporates the study of scripture, the sacraments. Church history, vocation, prayer, social justice and moral issues. A four-year retreat program provides occasions for additional personal growth. Older students work with younger students in a variety of ways. Campus ministry includes students who help plan and carry out Para liturgical and liturgical events. The Campus Ministry program continues to grow and utilize student involvement. A large group annually journeys to Washington, DC for the Right to Life March. Students are involved in the Bishop Connolly Food Pantry and Habitat for Humanity and they work on a variety of projects in the local area. Students complete Christian service to others each year.**

## **INTELLECTUALLY**

**Each individual student is challenged, encouraged and stimulated at every level. The curriculum reflects the students' growth and maturing as honors and Advance Placement courses increase in number and variety for upper level students. Summer reading and the continuing efforts made by all to improve critical thinking skills provide year round challenges for the student. The warm, caring student-teacher relationship fosters and enhances intellectual growth and provides additional individual attention.**

## **EMOTIONALLY**

**The Guidance Department provides testing, counseling and guidance services to students, faculty and parents throughout all four years. In addition, faculty and staff, whose time and energy are given in abundance to the students, offer support and guidance.**

## **PHYSICALLY**

**A program of Health and Physical Education including team and life sports assures the development of fundamental skills and a sportsmanlike attitude. Interscholastic sports create opportunities for healthy competition and structured play. Bishop Connolly sponsors teams for both our young women and young men. Football was added in the fall of 2003, (completing a successful season) also offered in the fall is soccer, and cross-country. In the winter Bishop Connolly fields teams for ice hockey, basketball, cheerleading, ski racing and in-door track. Our students also participate in gymnastics with Somerset High School and Swimming with Bishop Stang. In the spring we field teams in Lacrosse, softball, tennis, baseball and track**

**and field. Health classes increase the students' awareness of overall fitness, nutrition and alcohol and drug use. The new weight room is open to all students and faculty.**

#### **AESTHETICALLY**

**Appreciation of the arts and acknowledgement of the beauty of life are esteemed and developed at Bishop Connolly. Students have the opportunity to pursue courses offered in art, music and theater arts. Students are encouraged to refine their knowledge and appreciation of the arts through participation in and viewing of cultural programs. Each spring student work is recognized during the fine arts weekend and the spring musical.**

#### **MORALLY**

**Values are stressed across the curriculum as well as in class. While at Bishop Connolly, the student learns to deepen their beliefs and gain confidence in their own values of right and wrong even when they fall into direct conflict with the views of the world around them.**

#### **SOCIALLY**

**Throughout the four years at Bishop Connolly, students have numerous opportunities for social development and interaction. The freshman/sophomore cruise each spring is a fun event enjoyed by all. School dances such as the winter ball and junior/senior prom are a forum for interacting with friends and classmates. While these events are fun, they are also steps in the long process toward becoming confident caring adults. A variety of clubs are available to all students including student government, habitat for humanity, right to life, auto club, and a myriad of clubs that provide service to others. The National Honor Society and the World Language Honor Society recognize students for their outstanding contributions in scholarship.**

# **SERV'-ICE**

**n., an action done for the benefit of another**

**Why is service woven into life at Bishop Connolly?**

- **To foster a commitment to people in need through service and by involvement in the home, school and local community.**
- **To expand the students sense of belonging and responsibility their sisters and brothers in the global community.**
- **To recognize and use our own God-given talents, offering these gifts to the benefit of others.**
- **To gain knowledge, skills experiences and personal qualities such as patience and perseverance from those we serve.**

**How is service woven into life at Bishop Connolly?**

**All students are required to give service at home during their freshman year.**

**During sophomore year students give service to the school.**

**In junior year students give service in the greater community.**

**In addition Bishop Connolly sponsors a Food Pantry in Fall River once a month.**

**Other service clubs at the school run clothing drives, thanksgiving food baskets and toy and clothing for Christmas. The Habitat for Humanity is involved in community projects on an as needed basis.**

**National Honor Society members as well as many other student volunteers tutor students in need.**

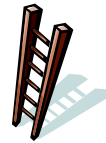
**Juniors and seniors provide service to the Campus Minister for retreats and other needed events through peer ministry.**

**Prayer for others is integrated into each class period and all school intentions are in the daily PA announcements.**

# SUC-CESS

n., the achievement of something desired, intended or attempted

Educators have long believed that what the student does outside of school affects what she or he does in the classroom. By taking an active interest and becoming involved in the education of your adolescents you can form a partnership with the school. Success is something not only desired but something to strive for. This certainly applies to our young people. Encouraging student achievement requires that parents build successful experiences. The following Parents Support Ladder is shared with you it comes from the National Association of College Admission Counselors.



## PARENT SUPPORT LADDER

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**STEP # 13. Recognize places to learn**

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**STEP # 12. Recognize school as work**

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**STEP # 11. Encourage co-curricular activities/work**

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**STEP # 10. Maintain home and school links**

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**STEP # 9. Serve as a home teacher or tutor**

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**STEP # 8. Provide a constructive study climate**

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**STEP # 7. Encourage the basics**

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**STEP # 6. Become involved in your daughters/sons school work**

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**STEP # 5. Express respect for effort**

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**STEP # 4. Recognize doing one's best as success**

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**STEP # 3. Recognize differences**

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**STEP # 2. Emphasize the importance of school**

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**STEP # 1. Encourage positive work attitudes**

# **PAR'-ENTS AS PART'-NERS**

**n., the act of combing forces with those who serve as the primary care-givers and teachers for the best possible educational effect.**

**As a parent or guardian you have the unique opportunity to provide information and assistance to your daughter/son as she/he proceeds through high school. You can support and extend the efforts of administrators, teachers, counselors and other school staff to develop the knowledge, skills, faith and attitudes that help students plan for the remainder of their education, their careers and their lives.**

**Design a home learning environment that is appropriate to your student's learning style. \***

- **Identify the physical space where studying and quiet reading can occur.**
- **Secure the resources (computer, if possible, paper, pens dictionary and so forth.) that you daughter/son will need.**
- **Establish a routine time for homework and special class projects and allow for balanced leisure activities.**
- **Promote sound time management skills, allowing attention to all subjects and planning for long-range projects.**
- **Encourage games and leisure activities that require reasoning, computations and problem solving skills. Allow your daughter/son to participate in building things, fixing things, cooking and related tasks.**
- **Monitor television watching and encourage viewing that complements the educational experience. Also monitor the use of the telephone and Internet.**

**Here are some additional ways parents can help their daughter's/son's to deal with academic and personal pressures and life changes.**

- **Talk to your daughter/son to increase awareness of stresses-academic and personal in their lives.**
- **Limit distractions when students study (monitor the use of the TV, Video games, telephone and computer)**
- **Encourage good time management skills.**
- **Promote daily physical activity, nutritious meals and adequate sleep.**
- **State clearly values and acceptable behaviors**
- **Set healthy limits without being too rigid or strict. (be fair and consistent)**
- **Accept imperfections**
- **Offer perspective and focus when young people feel overwhelmed by physical and emotional changes they are experiencing and help them understand and address real and perceived pressures.**
- **Discuss college and career options.**
- **Monitor out-of-school activities. (No student can work 20-30 hours at a job and hope to be a successful student)**
- **Celebrate students' academic and co-curricular successes and support your daughter/son's positive involvement.**

**\* Tips courtesy of the National Association of College Admissions Counselors**

# IM-POR'-TANT

adj. Significant: likely to determine or influence events

**Examples of some of the skills that college/universities and employers desire and how your daughter/son can develop them:**

- **Honesty and integrity:** live the truth in all things academically and in extra curricula's.
- **Intelligence:** electing to take a challenging academic program; completing all assignments and planning early for college.
- **Dependability:** volunteering or heading a club.
- **Ability to get things done:** developing a four year academic program of studies and adhering to it, registering and taking required standardized tests in a timely manner.
- **Desire to accept responsibility:** planning and activity, participating in student government, standing for what is right.
- **Common sense:** being responsible for your own behavior and avoiding things that jeopardize your or other's health and welfare.
- **Maturity:** making wise decisions about yourself and your future; being a leader in the classroom and co-curricular activities.
- **Problem Solving:** engaging in classroom discussions, completing alternative assessments.
- **Critical thinking:** look beneath the obvious solutions; go in-depth to find the deeper meaning, communicate with others in figuring out solutions to complex problems.
- **Interpersonal skills:** promote respect among all no matter their religion or ethnic background. Raise others top a new level of dignity. Make others feel safe and welcome.
- **Decision-making ability:** be realistic about life goals, gather information prior to making a choice. Plan in a timely manner.
- **Self-confidence/poise:** Participate in debate, Theater Company, mock trial or athletics.
- **Time management:** balance academic work with home responsibilities and extra-curricular activities.
- **Flexibility/adaptability to change:** make the most of every moment of life, learn and grow, accepting new challenges and not giving up.
- **Computer skills:** continue to learn and test out new computer skills.

**These are skills that need to be developed no matter what your daughter/sons' educational and career goals. You, as parents, can be a source of encouragement and support.**

# SELF ES-TEEM

n., the essential being of a person, to regard as: consider

For many self esteem is a life long problem, what is essential in making each of us unique is many times very allusive to even those who are well adjusted. As parents YOU can make a difference in your daughter's/son's self esteem. Help your child feel good about going to school, even on those days they maybe tired. You set the example as to their level of enthusiasm. Make sure they are in their complete uniform and that it is clean. When a person looks good they feel better about themselves. (Many corporations have now reinstated business dress vs. casual) Review with your daughter/son their planner in order to check homework and long-term assignments. The planner will include key dates and let you know how to help them plan their time, especially when they are involved in sports, drama or other activities. Be sure that the school calendar is displayed in a prominent place in order to anticipate progress reports and deficiency warnings.

Here are some key words that can assist you in building self-esteem.

Encourage your child by letting her/him know that they can do the job that they are responsible and capable.

Motivate by offering rewards and or enthusiasm when your daughter/son improve. Things like phone, video games and computer time are privileges to be earned rather than taken for granted.

Appreciate every small step. Remember that small steps lead to bigger achievements. Be positive by focusing on successes vs. failures.

Listen by paying attention. Listening means more than words. Body language can tell a lot. Use meals and family time as a way to catch up with what is happening in the life of your daughter/son.

Help work with your child and develop skills together. Establish a study area and set specific study times. They need to study nightly even if it means reading for an hour.

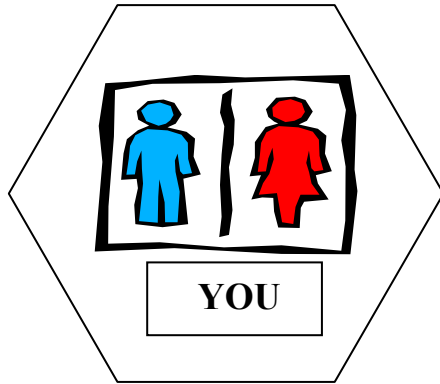
Guide by being fair and consistent with your daughter/son and by setting and example.

Participate although a youngster may appear embarrassed they really enjoy when you work or you are a spectator at an event they are participating in.

Love a significant part of the self-esteem process; let your daughter/son know that most of all they are loved by YOU.

# IN-DI-VID-U-AL-I-TY

n. the characteristics that distinguish one person from others



**SKILLS**  
**ACHIEVEMENT**  
**INTELLIGENCE**  
**PERSONALITY**  
**INTERESTS**  
**VALUES**

As a parent you have the resources to find out more about your daughter/son. It means looking at them in a very neutral way although you have concrete data available to you. Sometimes asking their friends can give you insights into their interests that you may not have been aware of that your daughter/son have.

## SKILLS

This is what we refer to as innate talents that your daughter/son may have. This would include but not be limited to an extraordinary talent in art, music math, writing, science, language or athletics. Sometimes individuals with these extraordinary skills are referred to as prodigies.

## ACHIEVEMENT

Your daughter/son have a wealth of data in this area. You can gather this information from past report cards and achievement test scores. This would also include any and all awards that your daughter/son have received for academics, attendance or athletics.

## INTELLIGENCE

Every parent believes that his or her daughter/son is the brightest person ever. However, intelligence is measured by your daughters/sons ability to learn, retain and know subjects areas. It also includes an ability to think critically, to go beyond the facts and figures. Usually formal testing is needed to produce an accurate estimate of intelligence.

## PERSONALITY

Some students are extroverts; they process material outside of themselves usually verbalizing ideas and so forth to others in order to draw conclusions. Other

**students are busy processing material internally we refer to these students as introverts. Much more attention is being placed on what we refer to as emotional intelligence, what makes some students more courageous than others, while other students are willing to be risk takers. There is no one right or wrong type of personality, however, knowing our daughters/sons personality will enable you to help them learn in the best possible setting.**

### **INTERESTS**

**This is an area that is sometimes overlooked, what is it that your daughter/son like to do when they are in a “free space”. Are they readers, stamp/coin collectors or are they more active always enjoying doing indoor or outdoors activities. Are they inquisitive always wanting to know what is behind something, “how did they do that?” Many times interests will give hints about future occupations or they may give hints on what helps a person stay healthy when they are doing their life’s work.**

### **VALUES**

**Being part of a Catholic school makes this an area of important focus. It includes everything from academic integrity, to respecting others and others property to not compromising others health or welfare.**

# **IN-VEST'-MENT**

**n., the outlay of energy, time, talent or money for future gain or profit.**

**Parents, alumnae and friends of Bishop Connolly believe in this education and are supporting the mission of the school.**

**During 2004-2005 more than \$175,000 in financial aid is being given through various channels.**

**Institutions of higher education believe in Bishop Connolly's educational program by providing continuing education for faculty as well as tuition reduction for graduate studies.**

**Bishop Connolly Jesuit scholarships are awarded on the basis of the Eighth Grade Placement Test. Students who qualify are given \$1,000 scholarships.**

**It takes all of us working together to provide a quality education to our students. This includes the dedication of highly qualified administration and faculty who are willing to work for less in order to keep tuition at a reasonable level.**

**Are you willing to provide energy, time talent and financial resources for quality education to continue at Bishop Connolly?**