PROGRESS SPEECH

FOR

LUIS MARTINEZ

Hello everyone and thank you all for allowing me the opportunity to share with you the progress and status of the work done throughout on all of the IT systems here at Notre Dame High School. I want to acknowledge the Board of Directors and in particular its president Michael Grande, the staff administrators, and most of all our school president Robert Curis for all of the support and guidance we in the IT department have received in order to keep the technological “mainframe” of this school as up-to-date and responsive as possible.

…And while we’re in the process of discussing progress and status updates, there’s probably no time like the present to first tell you a bit about myself (**If you want to make a joke you can say**)…. after all, I am almost as new here as a good deal of the equipment we’ve recently installed! (**And wait for the laugh**). I arrive at this challenge with thirty years of experience to guide me. I am from Peru and began my career in IT as a Systems Administrator for IBM Mainframes at Continental Bank, the second largest bank in Peru. I was there for seven years and in fact, you can see me at my most enthusiastic right here (**Point to yourself in the slide… If you want, say it with a little humor and wait for the laugh**). After that I moved to the US and continued in the capacity of Systems Admin for IBM Mainframes at Gannett Corporation, the company that brings you USA Today as well as other publications. Unfortunately… or fortunately… I **DID NOT** make the front page when I left after one year to become IT Manager at IBM’s facility in Poughkeepsie, NY and in Southbury Connecticut. You **KNOW** that I was working on **Super** Computers because I remained in that position for **eleven** years. I have to say, that was an incredible experience. I was then fortunate to be named the IT Director at Carolee Designs, a women’s jewelry manufacturer in Greenwich Connecticut. In the two years of my tenure, the exposure to the world of retail and commerce was fascinating and provided opportunities to create and implement systems and interface between our company and retail giants like Bloomingdales and JC Penney. Computer technology was well on its way to way to becoming an incredible and dominant element in all areas of business and I was proud to be a part of a growing phenomenon. The work was challenging at Carolee but fascinating nonetheless. When it was time to transition, I accepted the position as IT Director at Morell and Company, a wine and liquor retailer with wine bar restaurants in Manhattan. I had been with Morell’s for the past fourteen years before joining this great team here at Notre Dame. I am eager and optimistic as I bring my experience in support of the faculty, administration, and of course, the students. They are our future and I look forward to learning from **THEM**!

The actor and writer Al Boliska once said, “Do you realize if it weren’t for Edison we’d be watching TV by candlelight? (**Wait for the laugh**) In all honesty I have to express something that we all know to be the foremost issue facing modern education and that is that to be current is to be **behind**. In order to be equipped to give our students the best and most comprehensive and well-rounded education possible, our systems must be on par with the demands of this millennium and we all must be vigilant and prepared for expansion and inclusion of the tools required of education and the contexts both actual and virtual, that contain them.

As we al know, we are a fairly new team here at Notre Dame, but the problems… no… let me call them **opportunities**, were and are classic examples that continue to remind us how to get the job done… no matter what. We were presented with challenges that we faced with resourcefulness and much appreciated support, sometimes from “less likely” sources. Henry Ford, a pioneer in business, technology, and innovation probably said it best when he said, “Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.” I am very proud to be a part of this team- one that celebrates collaboration and mutual support and respect, all for the good of the student body, the administration of the school, and ultimately the future of our educational community. To me, there could not be a clearer example of this mutual support than the helping hand I received from our esteemed president, Mr. Curis. A firewall protects and defends against unwanted bits of data and breaches that threaten our systems. They sound impressive, right? They’re also complicated to install, heavy, and cumbersome…. especially when one is alone in the school and doing whatever possible to creatively problem solve…. solo. I found myself in that very situation… alone installing an incredibly heavy but necessary defense of our system and I am not going to lie… it was a **challenge**. But it was also an education in and of itself when I had the honor of being “assisted” by our versatile, educated, and highly resourceful president. It’s easy to gauge the measure of a leader by his commitment to his mandated domain and that incident taught me what it means to be guided by that level of dedication. We are part of a community that emphasizes brotherhood and collaboration and Mr. Curis embodies that spirit.

I am proud to report that the following updates and upgrades have been accomplished throughout our systems here at Notre Dame High School… all within the previous six months:

* Updated-upgraded all the computers in the school for the Staff and faculty (about 200) with new and refurbished computers and with hardware standards like 12 -16GB memory SSD drives for storage and HD for displays, software standards like Windows 10 Professional, Microsoft Office Professional 2013-2016, Adobe Cloud Suite etc.
* Upgraded Network Infrastructure to a 10Gb backbone, 1GB connection to any computer or network device (like Copiers, printers etc).
* Upgraded our Wireless system to 1GB speed with 75 Wireless access points through the entire school inside and outside (one Access point in each classroom).
* Upgraded our phone system with 2 new software releases to support the new network infrastructure and allow us to forward voice mail to each user’s email so it can be retrieved from anywhere.
* Upgraded our Classroom Projectors with 10 new Promethean Laser projectors to support new technology trends like project any content from any wireless device and share the interactive white board with 4 students at the same time.
* Upgraded our School Server from Windows Server 2008 to 2012.
* Upgraded our Arts Dept. from 1 server shared through 4 monitors to 8 computers.
* Upgraded our Skill Center Dept. from 1 server sharing 4 monitors to 6 computers.
* Added 2 new small copy machines for the Advancement Dept. and the Main Office.
* Upgraded our Internet access from 20MB to 200MB and lately to 1GB plus the backup from 20MB to 100MB and lately to 150MB to support the entire school and the new 600 students Chromebooks access to the Internet without any delay or interruption.

(**If you have any other points to add, please do so here – the above points are what you advised. Also, you didn’t mention installing the firewall in the bullet points- do you want to add that? If so, you can say,** “and don’t forget that legendary firewall… its capacity is….”)

(**If you feel it’s appropriate and want to make a little joke you can say this with some animation**): Whew!!! That should hold us for a week or two!!! (**And wait for the laugh**).

I think it’s wonderful that you as the collective “keepers” of this school… its stewards, leaders, and administrators, have recognized the importance of having updated systems in order to effectively mentor and inspire our students to pursue and value the chance to receive a quality education. Being able to have modern access on so many levels and in so many areas is critical to positive outcomes in our classrooms, offices, common areas, and ultimately the future of our school and community.

Tim Berners-Lee, the man who invented the World Wide Web almost thirty years ago had this to say. He said, “The Web as I envisaged it, we have not seen it yet. The future is still so much bigger than the past.” And the Web is only one part of the power and proliferation of modern technology in our present and future lives. Some of the more senior members of our school community may not realize this, but our students have never lived in a world without the current level of connectivity and technologic advances we regard as minimally essential to be able to provide the necessary infrastructure. All of the sophisticated hardware we have updated is essentially the “school supplies” of several generations past. Pencils and notebooks have, for the most part, stepped aside to make room for many of the upgrades I just mentioned. Thirty or forty years ago, students probably weren’t even allowed to have calculators in math class and now they have mega-gigs of memory and power to connect them to their virtual clouds. And speaking of clouds, **they** clearly have a new and “updated profile.” Clouds no longer mean rain is coming…. now we know that our knowledge bases are stored somewhere…. **up there**…. to access wherever it is necessary… for students, faculty, and teachers alike. This is a new world that we inhabit and it’s urgent that we maintain the pace of progress. I am thankful that you have the foresight to recognize the importance of maintaining and upgrading the systems as needed. Technology is an essential element in every aspect of our lives and in education it is a means and not an end to acquire knowledge. Our systems are a living and breathing organism of this school and they require attention, nurturing, and vigilant observation. Thank you all for your patience and support, and I look forward to exploring the next round of innovations that will keep Notre Dame on a par… or ahead… of the technology curve!