**Report on faculty presentations to outside professional groups,**

**July 2016 to June 2017**

**July 2016 IBSC Annual Conference, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada**

Paul Fehlner presented his action research on building empathy in boys, the abstract of which is below:

During the autumn term, 2015, nine 15 to 18 year old students from Blue Ridge School in St. George, Virginia took part in action research to determine the effects of repeated interaction between the students and the recipients of their community service.

Qualitative data collected during the action research indicated empathetic responses from the students of each type: cognitive empathy, emotional empathy and compassionate empathy. Not only did the boys come to understand the plight of the people they were serving, but they developed an emotional interest that compelled them to help.

Paul was one member of a cohort of peers in boys’ schools across the world addressing this question. The experience of networking and sharing with peers outside of BRS was a new one for Paul, one that he ended up enjoying much more than he initially thought he might.

**March 2017: SBSA Annual Conference, Boston**

Jamie Miller and Kevin Miller presented the Admissions-Academics relationship that BRS has developed in the admissions process; this relationship seems to have been a major factor in increased yield and increased attention. We shared some of the documentation we generate in this process, such as the one-page visual representation of a boy’s educational evaluation, and invited sharing of ideas from our peers. About sixteen admissions representatives and two consultants attended the session; we used the consultants to chair two discussion/sharing groups as part of the presentation.

* Takeaways: BRS has one of the best-developed Admissions-Academics relationships of any boarding school. Many attendees were impressed by the thought and energy BRS has put into this process.
* Good ideas from other schools to tweak our system are available, such as having the Head wrap up every boy’s overnight stay with a one-on-one conversation.

**June 2017: IBSC Annual Conference, Baltimore**

Peter Bonds and Kevin Miller presented a workshop at the IBSC Annual Conference on appropriate technology to engage boys. Just over twenty people attended, making for a full classroom. The more important metrics are:

* All but one person stayed for the entire session
* All participants were engaged in taking positions on technology use in the classroom through use of think-pair-share and “four corners” activities. Our peer schools are engaged in a similar debate over the merits and limits of technology, although a very wide range of
* Four people came up after the session ended to continue the discussion or share ideas from their own schools.

Link: <https://prezi.com/view/WSTgs9eibhWN3nfe7gbU/>

Mike Burris and Wayne Peterson presented a workshop at the IBSC Annual Conference on getting a design-build program off the ground by giving the boys a direct voice in the products to be made and getting them right into the building process.

* They had a full classroom and reported a very productive discussion, with some schools well into integrating their “maker spaces” into the academic program and others just feeling their way.
* The BRS approach seem well-received, with a few people coming up after the presentation to share ideas.