

College tours make adaptations

Virtual visits rise in popularity due to COVID

Madison Springett
Of The Talon staff

College tours are looking a little different this year as some schools continue with in-person tours and others provide virtual tours.

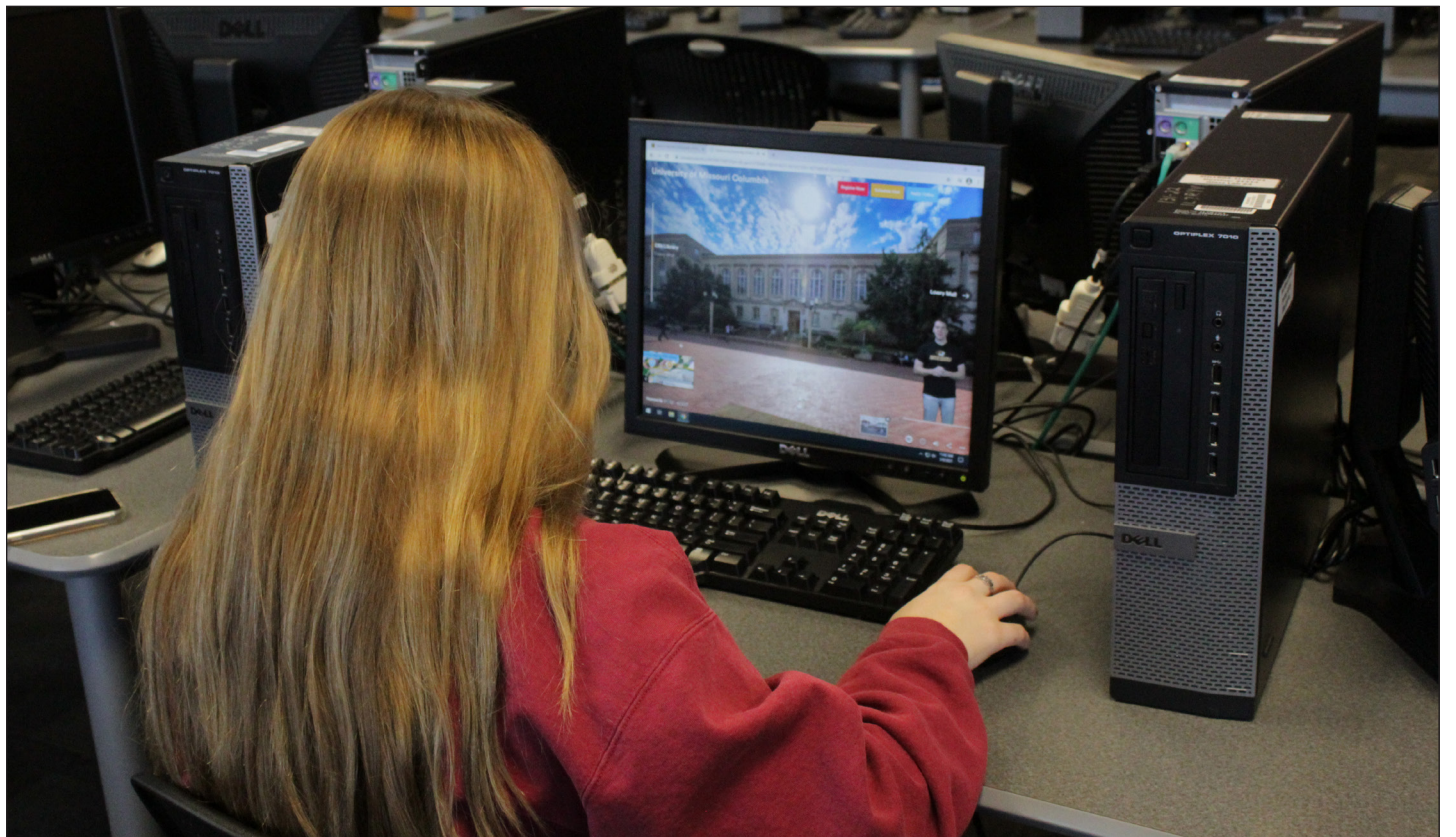
Juniors and seniors are faced with the decision of whether they are going to participate in virtual or in-person tours during the COVID-19 pandemic. Colleges all over the country are providing the option of virtual tours for students who might not feel comfortable going to in-person tours during this time or students who are in quarantine.

Junior Brenden Duff said that he has felt comfortable participating in tours in-person because colleges take precautions to make sure that everyone is safe and also make sure students have a good experience overall.

"I do not feel that I would get all of the same information as I would on an in-person visit. The reason for this is because you don't get to truly experience the campus and feel the atmosphere as well," Duff said. "I feel that more questions would pop into my head if I was in person because I would be able to see everything and want to learn more about it."

Duff has visited UMSL in-person and has toured Missouri State University virtually. He said he believes that he can learn many things about the school through a virtual tour, but it's harder to ask questions and get answers right away.

"I believe virtual tours do allow you to get enough information to succeed at the school, but it is difficult to learn different



Sophomore Lily Tarticchio takes a virtual tour of the University of Missouri-Columbia's campus in the library's open classroom. Virtual and in-person college tours are being taken by high school students during the pandemic, depending on both Covid restrictions and personal comfort levels. (Photo illustration by Ruth Vogel)

smaller details about the school," Duff said.

Junior Rebecca Rose also said that virtual tours make it more difficult to learn specific things about the school, including what the campus is like.

"I think that virtually touring would be harder because you're not actually there experiencing what it's like to walk around the campus, to see the buildings and dorms for yourself, etc.," Rose said.

Rose said she believes that students can get the same amount of information in-person or virtually but can get a better feel

for the school in-person.

College career counselor Ivy Hartman said that there are many ways to do an online or virtual tour such as photos, videos and 360 experiences online.

"You can sometimes chat with someone live on the website but you are not getting that in-person contact from an actual student who attends that college/university," Hartman said.

Students rarely officially decide where they are going to college before senior year, but many like to narrow down the

list beforehand. Rose said virtual tours make this decision more difficult.

"I think that you would still get a lot of information, but I don't think you would be able to tell if you can see yourself going to that college based on a virtual tour," Rose said.

Hartman also said that some colleges are providing webinars with current students and professors for different areas of study.

"It is difficult during this time but it has opened up more options to look at schools that are further away," Hartman said.

Administration addition

Board approves new assistant principal

Anna Kelley
Of The Talon staff

Eureka language arts teacher Sarah Goodman was approved by the Rockwood Board of Education as the new assistant principal starting July 1.

Goodman has been a teacher at Eureka since 2009 and teaches AP and freshman language arts. She said that although she really enjoys teaching, she wanted to take the opportunity to have a different perspective that will allow her to not only reach and aid a larger student body, but for the faculty and staff as well.

"This year with COVID-19, I've really worked to help a lot of teachers, to support them, and so this seemed like a chance to get to work with more students and to get to support teachers even more," Goodman said.

The process of becoming an assistant principal consists of multiple interviews with administrators, principals, teachers, and even parents. After that there is a final interview with Superintendent Dr. Mark Miles. Getting this far does not guarantee the position because it is ultimately up to the Rockwood Board of Education meeting to make it official. This upcoming year will be Goodman's first year as a principal and as of now, the school is still determining what class she will be with; this information will be released sometime in April. She said she was excited for the

new opportunities that come with being an assistant principal.

"I think I'm most looking forward to getting to know all of the students here at Summit and getting to see them so much outside of the classroom. I'm looking forward to all of the activities that I'll get to go to and getting to see people do what they love," Goodman said.

On March 4, Goodman had the opportunity to visit classrooms at the school and meet the students that she will interact with as assistant principal. She also was able to see familiar faces of teachers who previously taught at Eureka, such as social studies teacher Dustin Hays and math teacher Ryley Spiezo, along with fellow English teachers that she knows from curriculum meetings. As she is already somewhat familiar with Summit, Goodman said the most difficult part of the transition will be missing all the people at Eureka.

"I don't think that [the transition] is going to be difficult. I will miss the people and the students and the families that I've known at Eureka for a long time," Goodman said.

Junior Emily Cole said that she is excited that there is going to be a new assistant principal at the school and thinks that Goodman will be amazing.

"I am very excited. I think we have been very fortunate to have had great principals all throughout high school. So I am sure our next one will be great as well," Cole said.



ROSE Awards

Social worker Melissa Feig, social studies teacher Brent Batcheller, and parent Niki Stilwell are surprised with roses and balloons. Fifteen community members across the Rockwood School District were presented with ROSE Awards during the school day on March 3. (Photo by Ruth Vogel)