

A Middle States Moment

Renewing the Vision

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January 2006

Principal's Corner

From the desk of Sister William Adele, SSJ

Dear Parents and Parishioners,

You may have heard the tag line used by a clothing retailer that states: "An educated consumer is our best customer". With this principle in mind, the purpose of this newsletter is to keep you informed regarding the progress of the Middle States Reaccreditation process. Because you are such an important part of this process, being informed is a must!

Since the December issue, we have had our first meeting with the Planning Team on December 1st. The role of the Planning Team is outlined in this issue along with a list of members who make up the team.

The agenda included an overview of the reaccreditation process and a presentation of the work accomplished to date. The Team received their "homework" to prepare for the next meeting on January 17th. The Team will begin to address three areas of focus that include: Facilities and Finance, Marketing / Recruitment / Retention, and Curriculum and /Technology. We will have further information to report in our February issue of "A Middle States Moment".

Sister William Adele, SSJ, Principal

SLS Planning Team Members

Facilitator: Mr. David Trevaskis
Co-Chairs: Miss Elva FitzGerald
Mrs. Mary Santarelli

Msgr. J. Michael Flood
Sister William Adele, SSJ
Mr. Joe Hart
Mr. Steve Seweryn
Mr. Robert Pannepacker
Mr. Tom McDermott
Mrs. Terri Liebel
Mrs. Marian Dondero
Mr. Chris McGinley
Mr. Tom Wieckowski
Mr. Frank McCann
Mr. Joe Coll
Mrs. Sharon D'Amore
Mr. Bill Matthews
Mrs. Aubrey Keegan
Anna Ryan and Jonathan Sharp

Reaccreditation Protocol Explained

What does "Renewing the Vision" Mean?

The reaccreditation process allows for a school to choose from various protocols in which to conduct its review. Saint Luke's has chosen the *Renewing the Vision* protocol. This is a new protocol developed specifically for the Catholic Elementary School. The primary difference with this protocol is that rather than focusing on school improvements based on current school programs, facilities, etc., it allows for a school to vision a desired future. Steps taken during the accreditation process will lead the school to the desired result. Progress made during the accreditation process will be continually reviewed by the various committees as well as the Middle States Accreditation Board.

During the reaccreditation process, which will last through 2006, all aspects of the school and its programs will be reviewed. In addition to the various faculty committees, the *Renewing the Vision* protocol requires broad community involvement. This group includes parishioners, school parents, business leaders, alumni, faculty, students and administration. This group of individuals makes up the Planning Team.

Using the Middle States standards as a guideline, the various committees determine which goals and/or objectives the school deems necessary to ensure a desired outcome. A set of action plans will be developed for each of the goals. Review of the action plans will continue, with input from Middle States and the Planning Team, until the desired results are met.

Calendar of Events

January 10	Core Committee Meeting
January 3 – 13	Standards Committees Meet
January 17	Planning Team Meeting

Traditions and Transition

Philosophy, Mission and Beliefs Standard

Throughout the reaccreditation process the school is asked to review its Philosophy, Mission and Belief statements. These statements should convey general and specific purposes of the educational program and express the expectations for quality.

Members of this committee include: Mrs. Piper, Mrs. McDonald, Miss Dean, Mrs. Mullin, Miss FitzGerald, Mrs. Santarelli, and Sister William Adele. This group also has the added responsibility of overseeing the entire reaccreditation process as members of the Core Committee.

The **Philosophy** is:

Saint Luke the Evangelist School, located in Glenside, Pennsylvania, was founded in 1921. This Roman Catholic elementary school exists primarily to educate children in the practice of their faith and to provide an outstanding academic education.

The faculty and staff of Saint Luke School create an environment that integrates faith into all aspects of the students' formation by ensuring that Catholic values and practices permeate every facet of school life. Teachers cultivate academic growth by challenging students to attain proficiency in basic skills while developing each child's God-given ability.

The **Mission Statement** is:

The faculty of Saint Luke the Evangelist School, in collaboration with parents and the parish community, is committed to developing the Catholic identity and intellect of each child. This faith-based education prepares students morally and intellectually to meet the challenges of the 21st century by fostering spiritual and academic maturity and by challenging students to integrate Catholic values with their own God-given gifts and talents.

Revised July, 2005

Faculty Creates a Set of Belief Statements

Faculty members were responsible for the development of a set of belief statements. What is a belief statement? Belief statements serve as the foundation of a strong strategic plan, providing the value system upon which subsequent portions of the plan will be evaluated. They are the formal expression of a school's fundamental values. These statements describe the moral character of a school. Our teachers, as Catholic educators, espouse the following belief statements:

We believe that:

- ✠ God, as the core, permeates the environment of the entire school community.
- ✠ We educate and prepare the whole child, spiritually, academically, morally, and socially.
- ✠ We support parents in their role as primary educators of their children.
- ✠ We, the faculty and staff, are role models of our Catholic faith.
- ✠ St. Luke School creates an atmosphere that fosters mutual respect and tolerance for all people.
- ✠ We encourage students to witness Christ through service to others.
- ✠ We provide every child with opportunities to achieve individual potential.
- ✠ Teaching in a Catholic school is a vocation, not simply an occupation.

Student Life and Activities Standard

Faculty members responsible for this standard include Mrs. Ortolani, Sister Sandra, and Mrs. Dolan. Members of the committee are responsible for determining that a healthy atmosphere exists for all students. Activities should be appropriate and supplement the classroom experience. An appropriate program will foster a positive intellectual and cultural environment as well as encourage students' special interests.

Our Mission Statement in Action!

Spiritual

- ✦ Attendance at weekly Mass with the parish community
- ✦ Holiday prayer services
- ✦ Special prayer services for world events or special needs
- ✦ First Friday Mass
- ✦ Living Rosary
- ✦ Altar Servers

Service to Others

- 🌐 Villa Volunteers
- 🌐 Study Buddies
- 🌐 Bully Free Program
- 🌐 Service-oriented Tag Days
- 🌐 CYO supported service projects
- 🌐 School related service
- 🌐 School Safeties

Personal Growth

- 😊 Reading Olympics
- 😊 Octathalon
- 😊 Summer Stock
- 😊 After school enrichment program
- 😊 Primary grade enrichment program
- 😊 DARE
- 😊 BE REAL Leadership Program

Comments from the Parent Survey

- **SLS nurtures and educates the whole child, it is supportive of individual differences. The faculty goes above and beyond their call of duty.**
- **My wife and I could send our children anywhere, but we believe in SLS's mission and values.**
- **I feel the sense of community and values at SLS every time I walk in the door. I'm so glad my child is a student there.**
- **The anti-bullying program is wonderful. Last year's 8th graders worked on leadership and team building.**
- **There is a lot going on; services are great.**

Survey Results

The fifth to eighth grade students participated in their very own survey during November. Here are a few of their comments that refer to our Philosophy and Mission. Here is what our students have to say...

98.7% of our students agree that our teachers are committed to educating them to be good Catholics.

What I think is great about SLS is that whenever there is a problem in the school, like bullying, the principal and the teachers think of ideas to stop these problems like the Bully Free slogans. Their solution of Bully Free really did work and decreased the amount of bullies over a year.

The thing that is great about SLS is the bond we have with our teachers and classmates, the respect we are given, and the encouragement to really and truly believe and live our religion.

Something that is great about SLS is the environment. Here at Saint Luke's I really feel protected and that I belong to a family and not just a school. I love the feeling of being here and being safe. I would not have wanted to attend any grade school other than Saint Luke's.

Mission Standard

96 % agree that the mission and philosophy are reflected in the school atmosphere.

96.5% agree the children are taught Catholic teaching, values, and self-discipline.

98.3% agree that liturgical observances, such as Masses and prayer services play an important part of school life.

95.9 % agree that students have the opportunity to deepen their prayer lives through regular prayer in the classroom.

98.8 % agree that students are receiving a strong foundation in the Catholic faith.

98.3% agree that Catholic values are integrated throughout the curriculum.

Student Services Standard

94.8 % agree that their child feels a sense of belonging to the SLS community.

97.7 % agree that students are encouraged to treat each other with respect.

95.4 % agree that the school atmosphere is supportive and a positive learning environment.

95.4% agree that the teachers provide a nurturing and challenging atmosphere in the classroom.

96.6% agree that the school provides a safe and caring atmosphere for their children.