

School Improvement Goals: Quarterly Update for Winter 2011

AdvancEd is the parent organization of NCA (North Central Association) and several other educational accreditation organizations. Accreditation is a voluntary method of quality assurance that engages the entire school community in a continuous process of self-evaluation, reflection, and improvement. Our three **School Improvement Goals** are part of this process.

Another important component of the on-going process of improvement is the 5-year *Quality Assurance Review*. This coming April we will be hosting a team of professional educators who will come to Seton to review and examine evidence to determine if we are meeting the AdvancEd standards and achieving our goals for improving student learning and school effectiveness. We will continue to keep you informed about this process and our upcoming visit.

1. Bully Prevention Goal:

As we explained at Parent Night, in the fall, our entire faculty and staff are truly committed to our bully prevention program. After our initial in-service to review the program and results of the Bully Prevention Survey, our teachers re-introduced the program to our returning and new students in the fall. All homeroom teachers have settled into having regular class meetings with their homerooms each week. Class meetings are a weekly opportunity for students and their homeroom teacher to:

- Get to know each other better and build a strong sense of class community and belonging
- Learn about bullying
- Discuss/problem-solve bully situations
- Work together to stop or prevent bullying at school
- Talk about other issues of importance to students in a particular class

Teachers use various topics and activities such as scenarios, role-playing, and videos to spark discussion and prepare students for situations they may face or deal with problems they are currently experiencing.

2. Writing:

As we reminded you earlier in the year, our teachers are all teaching writing based on the 6+1 Writing Traits Program. We are continuing our concerted effort to ensure that all students are being taught in a consistent manner, writing regularly, and receiving valuable feedback from their teachers to improve their writing skills.

Right now, the students in grades four through eight are preparing for the **Metri Tech Writing Assessment** that will be given in February. This test will give us an idea how well we are writing as a school and provide helpful information for each individual student. This data will not only help us to know how well our students write at this point, but it will allow

us to compare their scores from last year to this year to hopefully demonstrate growth. We look forward to seeing the results of our efforts.

3. Math Computation:

We continue to work on improving our math computation skills at every level. Students in 1st through 8th grade are practicing and drilling the basic facts to improve accuracy and speed. We are also using *Math Minutes* exercises each week to continuously review and apply our improved computation skills.

In connection with our math computation goals, we are examining our entire math program through a process called curriculum mapping. This is a long, tedious, but very valuable process of evaluating our entire math program from kindergarten through 8th grade. After writing out our entire program, skill by skill, month by month, we are comparing our curriculum to the brand new *Common Core State Standards for Mathematics*. These standards define what students should understand and be able to do in their study of mathematics at each of the grade levels. It is important to note that the standards indicate both mathematical understanding and procedural skill.

This entire process of curriculum mapping has sparked a great deal of professional dialogue about the teaching of mathematics at Seton. Reading, understanding and discussing these standards is also helping us to determine at which grade levels we will eventually expect fluency with the various levels of basic math facts. The time, discussion, and collegiality required to complete the task of mapping our math curriculum is a tremendous effort for teachers that will truly benefit our students for years to come.