



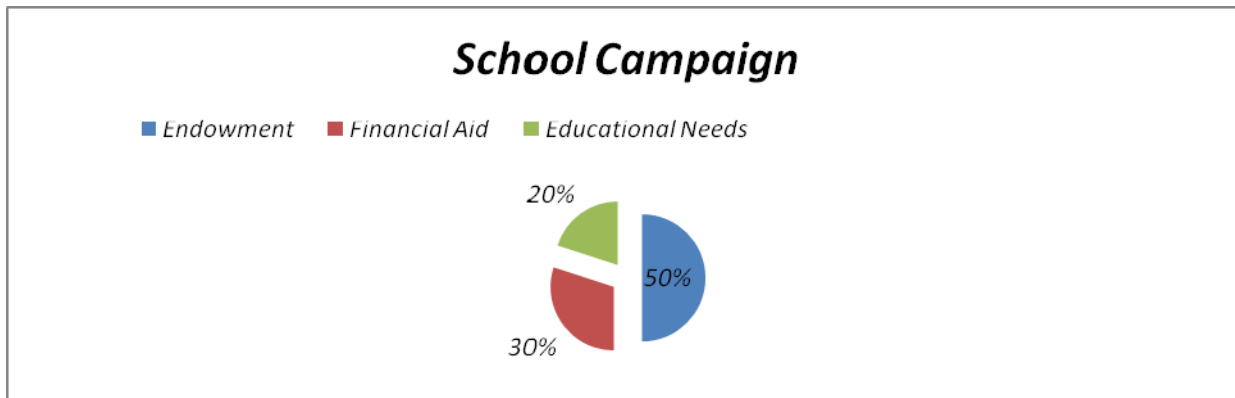
ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCHOOL

Principal's Letter January 8, 2010

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! I hope your holidays were enjoyable, and that your list of resolutions is manageable!

The Annual School Campaign has brought in almost \$25,000 to date, roughly 1/3 of our goal of \$75,000. The School Campaign represents an important part of both our short-range and long-range planning for our school.



What do the funds from the campaign do for us now?

They provide the school with financial aid for our current families who are experiencing financial distress. As you might imagine, this year there have been more requests for aid than ever before, a sign of our economic times. We do not want to lose any of our school families, but the reality is that if we do not have sufficient financial aid, we *will* lose students.

The funds allow us to make those extra purchases that provide the school with up-to-date materials and equipment, and ensure that the school facility is well-maintained.

How do the funds from the campaign help us to provide for the future of St. Francis of Assisi School?

The St. Francis Endowment is growing, thanks to the generosity of our families over the last 16 years. The special drive at the auction last year was awe-inspiring, as we collected almost \$200,000 for the Endowment. Where does it stand today? We are currently at **\$628,000!** We got there by setting goals and systematically and intentionally working towards them. What is our current goal?

WE WILL BE AT \$1,000,000 IN 5 YEARS

How will we reach the Endowment goal?

In order to reach our goal for the endowment, we need to meet our yearly goals for the School Campaign. I know we can do it-the St. Francis parents, parishioners, alumni and special friends have faith in the school and all that it has accomplished over the years. We are, after all, a faith-based school! Please help us reach the 2009-2010 school year goal of \$75,000.

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Continuation of Sheila's Bulletin

The Edge Program: How exciting it was to hear a report from Michael Stein-Ross, (6th grade teacher) our new youth minister, Trish Hanson, (1st grade teacher) and Nancy McHenry Dirks, (kindergarten teacher) about the Junior High youth group meeting last night. They had 80 students from the 6th, 7th and 8th grades at their first meeting, and early reports are that the kids had a great time!

Our parish is committed to having a youth program, and we thank Cheryl Brooten for being so open to getting it started this year, and for leading the search for the best program to fit our parish needs. The School Commission has also played an active role in seeing that the youth ministry remained a top priority, and they have provided seed money for the program. Finally, thanks to Michael for filling this critical need at St. Francis.

Reading Curriculum Progress: We are continuing our work with Grace Chiu, who works for the Center for Educational Leadership at the University of Washington. Grace came in on Wednesday and taught a lesson in Ms. Jayne's fifth grade classroom, modeling a technique that more fully engages the students in their own learning. At our faculty meeting later on that day, Grace demonstrated the technique and then had us practice it.

The great thing about my teachers is that they are always looking to learn more and grow as teachers. They were the ones who, despite high ITBS and WASL scores, pushed to find sources for more effective reading instruction. Grace has so much knowledge, and I look forward to a continued relationship with the Center for Educational Leadership in the future.

Speaking of good, dedicated teachers...

Lisa Sorenson, who taught first grade until she moved into the resource teacher position this fall, had an activity that she created posted in an educator's journal, Really Good Stuff. She was teaching directions (above, behind, next to...) and to do this, she collected multiple copies of maps from theme parks, children's museums, and petting zoos. She mounted the maps onto oaktag, laminated them, and then sorted them into sets of matching maps. She then divided her class into five groups and gave each group a set of matching maps plus five same-color erasable markers. Then Lisa directed, "If you are holding a blue marker, please find the entrance to your park, then circle the first attraction to the left of the entrance", or "Use your red marker to circle an attraction that is far away from the entrance." She encouraged group members to confer among themselves to develop their answers. This was a fun way to get her students working cooperatively as they expanded reading and map skills. Creative teaching!

Have a Great Weekend,

Sheila