



ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCHOOL

Principal's Letter September 17, 2009

Dear Family,

The staff is attending an in-service tomorrow at the University of Washington, and we know in advance we will be entertained as well as educated because the speaker, Dr. Rita Pierson, is back by popular demand. Rita addressed the teachers last year on the topic of diversity, and she gave us a valuable perspective on economic diversity and how it impacts the classroom environment. She talked about the steep learning curve that some students have when they come from a family that is not rich in vocabulary or in the social amenities that make it easier to transition from one environment to another. Rita pointed out that reading to your children at an early age not only fosters a love of reading in a child, but it enriches their vocabulary. This, in turn, will help them with reading comprehension. Makes sense. This year's topic is Partnering with Parents for Student Success. At St. Francis, we have an active partnership with our parents, recognizing that they are the primary educators of their children. Teachers communicate regularly with the parents, keeping them posted on what the students are learning and what they can do at home to support their children. I am sure, however, that Dr. Pierson will give us her unique perspective on how to enhance the parent-teacher-student model, and that we will walk away from tomorrow's presentation with much food for thought.

I do know one way that parents can continue to help us-they can make sure that their children are getting enough sleep. In an article entitled "The Healing Power of Sleep", Dr. Ranit Mishori listed the suggested guidelines for sleep based on age:

Toddlers	12-14 hours
Preschoolers	11-13 hours
School-age children	10-11 hours
Adolescents	9-10 hours
Adults	7-9 hours

After typing this, I went to bed early last night!

The barbecue last weekend was wonderful! I am really glad that we moved it back to the school, as I saw more of our old-time parishioners there, and I felt it was a bigger crowd than what we used to get at The Cove. Having a company run the games and adding a bouncy toy were key to the successful day. The children did not want to leave!

Thank you to Michelle Eten, the McCarrolls, the Knights, the Parents Association, and all the volunteers who made this a successful day. Pat yourself on the back for a job well done!

Have a Great Weekend,

Sheila