

2015/2016 NEWSLETTER

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

Telescoping the  
Stars



A LOOK BACK & A LOOK FORWARD...

## ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Each year, the Iowa Department of Education requires accredited schools to submit reading and math goals. Long and short-range goals allow us to work towards improvement in our program.

### Reading

St. Mary's long-range reading goal is to increase the % of students that are proficient in reading comprehension as measured by Iowa Assessments.

During the 2014-2015 school year, our goal was to have 67% of our fourth grade students meet expected growth in standard scores in reading as measured on the Iowa Assessments. Our goal was not met as only 46% of the students met expected growth. However, 87% of our fourth graders is considered advanced or proficient in reading.

Our reading goal for the 2015-2016 school year is to have 80% of our fifth grade class be proficient in reading based on the standard scores in reading on the Iowa Assessments.

### Math

St. Mary's long-range math goal is to increase the % of students who score at the proficient level on the Iowa Assessments in math computation.

During the 2013-2014 school year, our goal was to have our sixth class have 58% growth in standard scores in math based on the Iowa Assessments.

Our goal was not met as only 30% of the sixth grade students met expected growth. However, 78% of the sixth grade class is considered advance or proficient in math.

Our math goal for the 2015-2016 school year is to have 80% of our fifth grade class be proficient in standard scores in math on the Iowa Assessments.

We continue our work in both math and reading. The successes we have had have been in part due to our continuous work on the Iowa Core, focusing on the Critical Areas, and aligning our assessments with the Core.

During the 2014-2015 school year we have revamped our schedules to focus on larger literacy blocks and the use of a literacy management system called Daily Five. For the 2015-2016 school year, we purchased a new reading program that is aligned with the Iowa Core. We continue to use Daily Five and as well as focusing on the Critical areas in the Iowa Core. We plan on looking at a new math curriculum in the near future as well.

## 21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY

This summer, Apple TVs were \*purchased for four classrooms (grades 3, 4, 5, and 6). Through apps, Apple TV gives St. Mary's School access to the most riveting educational content. These new technology pieces allow us to access breaking news and weather on our large screens in these classrooms. Furthermore, they sync nicely with our macbooks and ipads to allow for more student and teacher wireless learning to take place.



*\*Mike and Jill (Lammers) Ridenour were the lucky cash prize winners at the annual Gala and they chose to give some of the prize back to the school to purchase the Apple TVs for 3 classrooms. The Magic Match sponsor for Mrs. Worden's third grade class, Gritton Associates, helped pay for AppleTV. We appreciate our alumni's support and our MM sponsors.*

## WHAT'S NEW AT ST. MARY'S

In the spring of the 2014 St. Mary's received word that it would be part of the Iowa Statewide Voluntary Preschool grant. West Delaware and St. Mary's will be collaborating on behalf of the preschool age children in the West Delaware School district to create a program that follows all the guidelines of the grant while maintaining a top-rate program. This grant gives St. Mary's fund to make improvements in it's program as well as making it possible for preschool age children at St. Mary's, to attend for free.

Nicole Pinkston, teacher at St. Mary's and Jenni Vaske, paraeducator at St. Mary's have been busy getting ready for the state visit in April. While it is a lot of work, the grant will allow us to add additional things to our program.



## A WORD FROM THE BOARD

If you are ever visiting our campus and take a look around you will see students immersed in projects, teachers patiently giving instruction, and staff going about their busy day to make sure everything is running smoothly. Although sometimes there are bumps, our school family finds a way to work through them and keep pushing to move our school forward.

A few years ago we added a preschool program because we knew with the advances in early childhood education we needed to take part in reaching those younger students. This year we have been able to partner with West Delaware to take part in Iowa's preschool program and offer our program for free to our youngest students. Along with that we have made some updates to abide by the State grant regulations by adding a fence around the playground area to keep our young students safe from the parking lot.

A new reading series was put into place this year and our faculty has been working hard to learn and implement the program with the intention of building on and improving the reading comprehension in our school. We want to make sure our students are ranking at or higher than

what's expected of them, all to help them succeed in the future.

We have given the teacher's lounge a little make over to help with storage and make it feel like a place where they can relax and try to unwind during the day. We have great appreciation for what they do in the classroom. Sometimes they become the parent away from home which is way above what is in the job description but we appreciate that too.

Thanks to generous donors through the various fundraising events, tuition has been able to stay affordable. Tuition assistance has been available to anyone wishing to send their child to St. Mary, no matter their economic situation. We are looking at ways to enhance our SCRIP program. The Gala Committee is in full swing in preparing for the 2016 gala. Our Magic Match sponsors continue to be very supportive and provide for those little extras in our classrooms, such as educational materials, field trips, and supplies. We did not have our fall raffle this year as sometimes things need to change or be refreshed but we do continue to keep our minds open to new ideas for third source income as this is a major factor in our school's annual budget.

On the horizon we are looking at better and more visible signage on both the North and South sides of the school building. Some updated landscaping will also be done. We want people to know where St. Mary School is and make the exterior attractive so that new comers to our community take notice. First impressions are so important and we want to attract new families to our school and keep it growing.

Our largest class this year is the first grade with two classrooms who started their years with us as kindergartners. We want to continue to attract families to our school because we know we have a good thing going here with superb academics and such dedicated faculty and staff. Wouldn't it be impressive to increase all class sizes? That would mean some strategic planning of space and resources but I am confident we have the right minds working for us to take on that challenge in the future.

We are so blessed to have this great school and the future continues to look bright.

**Written by St. Mary's Board Chairperson  
Kathy (Lammers '88) Mersch**

## MRS. COLE RETIRES

After 42 years of teaching (41 of those at St. Mary's) Mrs. Barb Cole retired at the end of the 2014/2015 school year. Mrs. Cole grew up on a farm and later moved to Greeley, Iowa. She attended school through eighth grade in a small school there and graduated from West Delaware in 1969. Her mother instilled in her a love of reading and writing at an early age.



After graduating from Upper Iowa she taught at St. Joseph's in Earlville before landing a job at St. Mary's where she spent her years of teaching until her retirement.

Mrs. Cole created the sixth grade slide show, the Iowa History Day, Fat Tuesday, Apple Day, Twister Trivia and she wrote the script for the Holy Thursday prayer service that is still used today.

We asked Mrs. Cole what life lesson did she want to share with us. She said, "Teaching is a wonderful profession. It is truly not always about the money

that makes us the happiest. I have been fortunate to have taught entire families-including parents and even grandparents. My classroom has been my second home, and I will miss that."

In her retirement, Mrs. Cole plans to organize her albums and scrapbooks as she has kept every Valentine, note or picture a student had given her. She plans to sub, tutor and volunteer as well.

Thank you Mrs. Cole for your service to St. Mary's.

# WHAT'S NEW WITH OUR ALUMNI?

We all have special memories of that special teacher or event when we attended school. Here are several fond memories from our Alumni:

"Mrs. Sandman's famous goulash and cinnamon rolls, school picnics at Tirrill Park, kickball games, influential teachers and leaders such as: Mrs. Wallace, Mrs. Grimm, Mrs. Cole, Mrs. Greve and principal Sr. Anne."

– Kathy Lammers Mersch - 1988

"Sister Daniel was my favorite teacher. She'd ask me to stay in at recess to clean the blackboard and then she'd give me Black Jack Gum... but I didn't like the gum. Great memories."

– Cindy Domeyer Downs - 1977

## Where are they now?

"I have 20 year old twin sons. My son Christopher attends Saint Anselm College in Manchester, NH. Founded in 1889 by Benedictine monks, which still has it's Abbey on campus. It is the third oldest Catholic college in New England. My son Ryan plans to transfer to UConn in the fall." – Linda Frentress Switzer -1971

## Special thanks to the following Alumni for their donations to our Alumni Funds over the past three years.

**Jeanne Guilgot Ehr - Class of 1958**

**Margaret McCann - Class of 1962**

**MaryJean Foust Uptegraph - Class of 1965**

**Charlene Tegeler Erceg - Class of 1967**

**Linda Frentress Switzer - Class of 1971**

**Cindy Domeyer Downs - Class of 1977**

**Kathy Lammers Mersch - Class of 1988**

**Kristin Bohlke McCusker - Class of 2003**

**Sandra Cannon - Class of 1968**

If you would like to make a donation please send in the information included at the bottom of this page.

### Alumni Information / Donations

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ High School Class of: \_\_\_\_\_

*First Maiden Last*

Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal news or memories you would like to include in future newsletters: (include letter if needed) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*\*Reunion photos? We would love for you to share them with us.*

Alumni Fund Contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Tuition Assistance or Wish List: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Return this to:

St. Mary's School Alumni Committee

c/o School Principal | 132 West Butler St. | Manchester, IA 52057