

## *Where are we in the Process?*

### An update on the NCA/WCEA Accreditation Process

#### “Survey Says...”

The School Improvement Process requires that the year our school writes the self-study, we must survey the stakeholders in our community. We then use that information in addition to all of the other information we have gathered to continue to make improvements in our school so that our students can have the best education possible in a nurturing, caring, Catholic environment.

Last January the stakeholders of our school, parents, students, staff, and clergy, had the opportunity to take a survey expressing their opinion on several different areas related to the school. We had full participation by students, staff, and clergy. Of the 292 families registered at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, 190 parents responded. That is a response rate of 65% for parents.

Our students took the survey at school during their computer class, or in the primary grades, with the assistance of an aide, and then the results were put into the computer database. Parents, staff, and clergy were able to access the survey online.

We would like to highlight some of the results for you.

The primary reasons parents say they send their children to us is for the “religious atmosphere and education” (97%), followed by a “safe environment” (71%), and “discipline” (62%). Parents and students alike indicate that we are doing a great job meeting the primary reasons for parents sending their children to Our Lady of Perpetual Help (see graphs).

One of the areas that parents would like to see improve is effective communication “regarding individual student progress.” Although parents have indicated that we are improving in this area, as a staff, we will continue to work towards clear and consistent communication at all levels.

Another area that parents would like to see improve is the school providing “a challenging, comprehensive, and relevant curriculum.”

NCA/WCEA defines for us what a “challenging, comprehensive, and relevant curriculum” is. For NCA/WCEA it is “a demanding, faith-centered curriculum based on themes and concepts that encourage students to achieve at their potential, to use ‘higher order thinking skills,’ and to apply and synthesize knowledge.” It is also “a curriculum that is viewed as a broadly conceived concept and makes sense as a whole with subparts that are unified, connected, and integrated” (Process for School Improvement for Catholic Elementary Schools, 15). Fortunately, the Diocesan Curriculum Guidelines, the basis of our school curriculum, is structured as broad themes and concepts with individual parts of each curriculum being unified and connected in a way that makes sense for our students.

Our staff is continuously in the process of examining, evaluating, and adjusting the curriculum to ensure that our students are getting a great education. One way that we are currently in the process of addressing this, is by creating clear, grade-level and subject area expectations for each subject area in our school and then aligning each subject area to our school wide Student Learning Expectations. It is a lengthy process, but one that is well worth the time and effort for the benefit of our students’ academic achievements.

Please visit the links to view some of the results of the student, staff, and parent surveys. We appreciate everyone who took the time to complete the survey. We rejoice in our successes and continue to work on areas where we show a need for growth.

Stay tuned for the next installment of *Where are we in the Process?...*

“Going Deeper”