

Welcome Back!



It's good to have the kids back in school. Getting ready for them is almost more work than it is once they get here. I'm sure the teachers are glad to have them back because it gets me out of their hair. I had them in a lot of meetings this year before the kids even got to school. It reminded me of a boss I once had who told me, "We're going to keep having these meetings until we find out why no work is getting done!" It's not a good sign when you catch yourself doing the same things that used to annoy you. That said, we were doing things to make us better in the classroom for the benefit of your children.

I think it's important you know what we are doing at school when the students are home. *We are learning and growing as educators.* I honestly believe that in order for us to do the best job that we can in educating your children we have to continue our own education. So while your children are home on those random days throughout the school year, the teachers are in class as students themselves.

One of the areas we are focusing on is math instruction. We have been doing some good things in math instruction in the past, but there is always room for improvement. While our Terra Nova Math Scores were above average last year, they were still *our* lowest area. Over the next couple of years you will see your children's math problem solving skills increase as our K-6 teachers strive to improve their teaching strategies in this area.

Another area that we are focusing on is learning how to differentiate our instruction. All of our junior high teachers and those who don't teach math are working on how to challenge students at their level of achievement whether that is high, average, or low. They are also discovering that not all students learn in the same way. Some students are visual, some are auditory, some are kinesthetic, some are more logical in their thinking, etc. These teachers are learning how to frame instruction to meet student needs and challenge them at a high level.

The math and differentiated learning are taking place simultaneously. While one group of teachers is in class learning new math strategies, the other group is in class learning how to challenge students of all abilities, learning styles, and interests.

The third area that we are focusing on involves **all teachers**. It is School of Faith. Like the math and differentiated learning, we will be doing this all year long on some of those days when students are not in school. The goal of this program is for each of us to grow as disciples of Christ. It is intended to strengthen us in our faith and our knowledge. This, in turn, will enable us to help your children grow in their faith. We cannot pass on to others that which we do not have ourselves.

In His Service,

Jim Makey
Principal