



## Notes from Ms. Kelly

Welcome back and Happy 2018! Hope everyone enjoyed a wonderful break with your child(ren)! It was awesome to welcome them back this week! I can't tell you how much it brightens my day to see their smiling, eager faces each morning as they arrive! Just another testament to a learning environment that our teachers have created that our students truly love.

On that note, today we began our Zero Tardy Challenge as we embrace the fact that "every minute counts". Thank you in advance for partnering with us to make the value of each moment of educational time a priority. There is an informational sheet attached to this note that explains the challenge.

You might have noticed that our "Extreme Makeover" started in the kitchen area over break, but that is just the beginning. Over the weekend, a group of volunteers repainted the main floor (kindergarten and library), started the upstairs (2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>), and worked on adjacent stairwells. The goal is to have a fresh, new look for our current and future students. We will continue next Saturday. If you are available, please consider joining us! Thank you to everyone who has been a part of the makeover thus far and, in advance, for those who will be!

Mark your calendar for next Saturday as our 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grades hosts Winter Wonderland Bingo! As always, the games and food are a dollar and there will be fun activities for the kids.

Our school has been signed up to participate in the Great Kindness Challenge the week of January 22-26<sup>th</sup>. Look for more information to come with an added "family participation option". Also, Catholic Schools Week is coming the end of January! The schedule of events will be posted later this week. It will be a fun-filled week beginning with the Art Auction/Family Dinner on January 27<sup>th</sup>! Our Extreme Makeover will be unveiled that weekend as well at our Open House!

Below, you will find information on our January Growth Mindset mantra which is "Feedback is a gift...accept it!" The focus will be on helping our students understand that often feedback is given because the person cares enough about us to want to help us improve. 😊

Thank you to all of our families for sharing the gift of your child with us each day! Have a terrific week! 😊

# January Growth Mindset Mantra

## "Feedback is a gift-Accept it"

In 2007, *New York Magazine* posted an article recounting an experiment of Carol Dweck's, one of the founders of the Growth Mindset. In this experiment, she presented 500 fifth graders with a test consisting of easy to solve puzzles. Afterward, half of the students were told, "You must be smart at this." The other half were told, "You must have worked really hard." When the students were presented with another test, those who had been told they were smart were afraid to take on more difficult work because they did not want to jeopardize the "smart" label. Those who were praised for their effort did not feel the insecurities and were able to exist comfortably in the realm of making mistakes as a consequence of hard work and trying new things.

With that in mind, this month's focus is on better methods of praise and critique that will help our students foster their growth mindset so that they are able to confidently take risks in learning. This will include how to accept feedback as a way to work toward self-improvement. We invite you, as their primary teacher and our partner, to join us in thinking about how you use praise and critique your child.

### **Person Praise versus Process Praise**

Person praise focuses on a student's traits and qualities, like intelligence. "You're so smart" is an example of this. It sends the message that this is an inborn quality that they possess. Process praise, on the other hand, acknowledges the effort that contributed to the student's success. An example of this would be to say, "You worked really hard at that."

### **Person Critique versus Process Critique**

This is also true when critiquing a student. Person critique blames the failure on a personal quality. "You're just not smart at math" is an example. Process critique would involve a focus on the effort level that was put into the task like, "That strategy didn't work for you. What else could you try?"

### **Vague versus Specific Feedback**

Another important consideration is whether or not you are being vague. An example of vague praise is, "You're awesome." Instead of being vague, explain what it is they have done right. Feedback can help a person grow when they know what specifically it is that they have done correctly.

As you can see, the idea is to be mindful about how we offer and accept feedback.

# **St. Laurence**

## **Zero Tardy Campaign**

### ***In school, On Time, Every Single Day***

Student tardies at St. Laurence make up 64% of the schools' population at one time or another with some becoming chronic. Studies conducted by the U.S. Dept. of Education on truancy, which is connected with tardiness, show that school attendance is a major factor when it comes to school success and student behavior.

#### **Problems with Tardiness**

The most crucial learning hours of a school day are the morning hours, because they are when students are most attentive. Students who are tardy miss the beginning of their morning classes, and they also cause a distraction when they arrive late to class.

#### **Academics and Achievement**

Students who are frequently tardy have lower grades, lower scores on standardized assessments, and lower graduation rates at the high school level. Chronic tardiness in elementary and middle school is also linked to failure in high school.

In the National Center for Education Statistics *2007 indicators of School Crime and Safety*, teachers surveyed reported that students who are frequently tardy have high rates of suspension and other disciplinary measures. Tardiness causes students to feel disconnected with school, leading to behavior problems.

#### **Job Performance**

Students who are frequently tardy to school are more apt to be fired from a job for showing up late.

#### **Effect on Others**

When students are tardy, they negatively impact their teachers and other students. Teachers are often required to allow tardy students to make up work, which often required them to restructure their lessons or re-teach missed material. Tardiness also takes other students' attention away from a teacher's lesson, leading to more behavior problems and missed instruction.

#### **Good Choice Pledge**

As part of our Discipline with Dignity program, we have created the Good Choice Pledge which states our three core values. Each morning, our school community recites them together as we say, "We are respectful, responsible and safe!" Please help your child be respectful of our school start time and responsible in getting to school by then because EVERY MINUTE COUNTS! ☺

# *The Zero Tardy Challenge*

Because we are committed to making EVERY MINUTE COUNT at St. Laurence so that we can provide the best opportunities for your child, starting January 8<sup>th</sup>, we will begin a class challenge and here's how it works...

-Each teacher has a super hero icon and will begin at the starting line of our race. The board will be downstairs in the cafeteria so that everyone can see progress.

-If that class has perfect attendance at the Morning Meeting, the icon moves forward one space. This will happen each day.

-By the end of the month, the class who has moved the farthest, will win a special prize that month. The prizes will vary each month.

Please help us toward our goal of Zero Tardies in 2018! 😊

