

School Board: State of the School Address - 2009

As the cold winds of January blow, St. Joseph School is able to bask in the glow of many accomplishments. This past year has brought heartwarming successes to our doorstep --all a direct result of the school's thoughtful planning and curriculum initiatives.

At the youngest end of our grade school spectrum, the 2008-09 school year saw burgeoning enrollment in kindergarten. We opened THREE kindergarten homerooms, enrolling more than 49 five year olds. The increased enrollment is due to several factors, including our "Kindergarten Readiness" program and the innovative teaching methods of our kindergarten teachers. Undoubtedly, St. Joseph School is the place to be!

We actively promote "living our Catholic values", and have a committee dedicated to exploring the ways in which we teach children values and recommending continued improvements. We hope that by actively instructing our children on the application of the principles of their faith to their daily encounters with others, we will help our school continue to grow as a nurturing and loving community.

Junior High continues to be the envy of area grade schools. Our graduates continue to test out of Algebra I at New Trier, Regina and Loyola Academy. Over half of the graduates place in honors English. AP History for our graduates leads to hours of college credit because of the solid base from our Social Studies Program.

St. Joseph School undertook a challenge last spring to meet the needs of EVERY student. *This includes students who need extra support and those who need extra challenge.* This fall we created an intervention team to learn how to identify students with special needs and how best to differentiate our curriculum to meet those needs. THE RESULT -- our school has been designated as a PILOT SCHOOL for inclusive education by the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Our success over the past decade has made St Joseph School a standout. Accordingly, the Archdiocese has selected our school as a model of "BEST PRACTICES" in elementary school education. Consulting firm, The McKinsey Group, has been assigned to study teaching methods and organizational practices used at St. Joseph's. The purpose is to use our structure as a model for other grade schools in the Archdiocese.

The decade since St. Joseph opened has resulted in an AURA over our school. You see it on the faces in the morning as the children arrive for school. This AURA is evident as we hold our own in a competitive District 39. Mostly, this AURA is attributed to the success achieved by our faculty, staff, volunteers and you. The support of our St. Joseph Parish is immeasurable. Thank You!!!