

Notes from Dr. Greco
December 2, 2010

Middle States Accreditation Update: Our 6 Year Report submitted in May 2010 was approved by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools on November 22, 2010, effective November 1, 2010. Ten principles guide the Middle States process and capture the uniqueness of this approach to elementary education accreditation.

An MSA-accredited school:

- Recognizes a continuum of learning from infancy through higher education
- Supports learner-centered education
- Identifies comprehensive, research-based program standards
- Focuses on best practices, encourages family partnerships, and values program standards
- Accommodates cultural and community diversity
- Engages program staff in strategic thinking and planning
- Promotes continuous quality improvement through self-study and monitoring strategic action plan progress
- Creates a professional support network for members
- Requires that schools implement their mission
- Assures that accredited schools meet fiscal, administrative, and education excellence

The general commendations cited by the commission for Immaculate Conception School included this summative narrative:

“Planting the seeds of faith and knowledge in the fertile minds of today’s youth is the mission of the dedicated administration and faculty of Immaculate Conception School. All constituents of the school community work in unison to promulgate academic excellence. They create a vibrant environment in which children can flourish spiritually, intellectually, physically and socially. They expound the Gospel message through the promotion of moral awareness, familial values and self-discipline. A multi-faceted program effectively prepares their students to successfully function in this global society of the twenty first century. This is especially actualized in: high scholastic expectations mirrored in an enriched curriculum; cultivating analytical thinking skills; tapping into the resources afforded by technological tools; a science program that encourages experimentation and exploration, students garnering scholarships to local high schools; and honing skills in the fine arts arena. With the scholastic sphere firmly in place, children are given myriad opportunities to express their spirituality through liturgical celebrations, service projects, seasonal devotions and communal prayer. Additionally, their vast array of co-curricular and extracurricular activities are instrumental in nurturing children’s abilities beyond the parameters of the classroom enriching and broadening their horizons. The school’s mission resonates their overarching objectives. Past accomplishments include bolstering student learning through the use of Smart Board technology. This has promoted learning experiences characterized by interaction in flexible group settings. Next, their classroom meeting anti-bullying program is an admirable undertaking since we inhabit a world fraught with injustice and violence. Finally, learning teams have developed a school-wide assessment for literacy. Pivotal goals identified by the Notre Dame Task Force on Catholic Education and designed for a productive future revolve around a five-pronged initiative: Catholic Faith Formation; Data-driven Instruction; Leadership to Support the School’s Mission; Sustainability through an Established Business Plan; and Enrollment and Marketing.”

Our DOAS (Description of Accredited Schools) is online on the Middle States website in its entirety. You can reach the website through our website www.icsjenkintown.org.

Important information to Philadelphia families with children in our school:

Children's Scholarship Fund Philadelphia is accepting applications for 750 new, K-8th grade scholarships for Philadelphia children. The application process is free and easy to complete. Now is the time to act. The application deadline is March 1st. These need-based scholarships are available to students entering grades K-8th in September 2011 and are awarded by random lottery. There are 750 new scholarships available for a maximum funding amount of \$2,075 per year, per child. To be eligible, families must: meet income requirements, be residents of Philadelphia, have a child entering grades K-8th in fall 2011 and complete the required essay question. The easiest and quickest way for families to submit an application is online at www.csphiladelphia.org. Only families who are awarded scholarship opportunities will be notified by mail, in mid-March.

Included Today:

- Children's Scholarship Fund application for Philadelphia residents
- Carol Night information
- The School Counselor Newsletter
- Mission Santa Maria Toy Collection
- "Straight Talk for Parents!" free seminar

FYI:

The first marking period trimester grades close tomorrow, Friday, December 3rd.

If you are ordering parish spirit wear and would like to receive your order by Christmas, your deadline to order is December 10th.

Carol Night is Wednesday, December 15th. Details are enclosed today. We all look forward to this "gift" to you from your children.

The Kindergarten Tea will be held on Friday, December 17th. This is a date change from what is on the parish calendar.

