

2022-2023 Annual School Development Report

St. Thomas Aquinas



Our Mission: The school community of St. Thomas Aquinas is committed to academic excellence nurtured in a safe and inclusive learning environment. Here our students can reach their fullest potential supported by home, school, and community partnership.

Introduction

We returned to school in September 2022 in a “low risk” environment. While we were still adhering to our *Safe Return to School Plan*, we were presented with some opportunities to return school to a sense of familiarity that students and staff enjoyed prior to the pandemic. The previous year had seen many challenges, but in the face of these challenges, we continued to have success on the part of our students.

As in previous years, we are very pleased with our School Development Survey results as a whole - but we are always looking for ways to enhance academic opportunities for our students. Our PMF data and survey results indicate that we are experiencing success academically when compared to other schools which are similar in size, as well as when compared to the provincial results. We take a tremendous amount of pride in these results, but like any institution devoted to student learning and engagement, there are always ways to improve student opportunities.

During the Strategic planning day scheduled in November 2022, we decided as a school based planning team to focus on the collective efficacy determinant. Concerns were raised on the achievement levels in Literacy and Numeracy, so our team decided to make a school wide effort to help raise these levels. We will be continuing our SBL - Standards Based Learning Pilot for the 2022-2023 school year.

This is the fourth year using the new school development model and we are extremely proud of the progress we have made thus far.

Our strategic planning day gave use the opportunity to examine our school data and establish next steps to address areas of needed growth as well as areas of success and positivity. Here is some overall results which helped us shape our school development direction, based on our data:

- The vast majority of feedback from teachers, students and their families was very positive.
- When analyzing our PMF data, we have scored High or Very High in most areas except for school engagement (student) as well as self efficacy (teacher). It is concerning that teacher self efficacy has dropped from very high to intermediate, and that STA has dropped from 7 areas of very high in 2021 to 3 in 2022. According to our reading record tracker, 61% of students from grades 1-6 are reading below expected grade level. Our staff as a whole decided that this should be our priority going forward, along with lower numeracy scores, as our strategic issues for this school year to focus on.

Strategic Issue/Goal: Continue to Improve Collective Efficacy

Objective: Improve Collective Efficacy: Teachers work together to search for high-yield strategies and investigate their evidence of impact. We must validate instructional improvement through sources of data, making the link between teachers' actions and student outcomes explicitly.

How did you know this was a Strategic Issue/Objective? What evidence did you have?

- According to our PMF data for grades 5 and 6, 27.9% of students don't feel value in their schooling.
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- Issues from all teachers regarding the number of students whose reading levels are below grade level and receiving targeted or intensive interventions

in literacy and numeracy. According to the Reading record tracker on STA Staff drive, 61% (30/49) of students from K-6 reading below grade level.

Year end Summary of Progress. What evidence do you have to support this progress?

- Established 7 periods in our 14 day cycle where we have guided reading sessions. Students from grades 1-5 are grouped by ability and go with various teachers (including reading specialist).
- Literacy fair occurred in Jan 2023. Students from grades 2-8 presented a book report/talk) for others to view. This occurred during PM class time. Parents were invited in to view reports. Afterwards, students and parents were invited to stay for board games.
- BEV document for recording reading levels used and documented all year by homeroom teachers
Read to principal /VP- not completed, but both read to a class during literacy week.
- Buddy reading occurred with grade 6 and Kindergarten
- RTL BEV document used and all students with interventions documented.

Next Steps...

- Next school year, include more grades in buddy reading.
- Continue documenting reading levels
- Continue BEV document for RTL tracking/interventions
- Host another Literacy fair during literacy week
- Begin guided reading ASAP in Sept, this year we started in November.
- Try to put more emphasis on those students on writing RTLs.

Strategic Issue/ Goal: Improve Collective Efficacy

Objective: Improve Collective Efficacy: There is a belief by teachers that it is their fundamental task to evaluate the effect of their practice on students' progress and achievement. We must set expectations for formal, frequent, and productive teacher collaboration and create high levels of trust for this collaboration to take place. The emphasis should be on identifying student learning needs and detecting problems that need to be addressed in classrooms, and making adjustments to instruction as necessary.

How did you know this was a Strategic Issue/Objective? What evidence did you have?

According to our RTL master form, 7 students are currently receiving targeted interventions in numeracy.

According to the PMF data, only 43.4% of students in grades 7 and 8 feel confident in their use of learning strategies and their use in learning.

Year end Summary of Progress. What evidence do you have to support this progress?

-BEV Document was created, we have increased number of students who have been receiving interventions in numeracy (As of June 2023, 6 students), through our IRT. It is believed that more students would benefit from interventions, but with the limited number of teaching/IRT units, we had to combat this through the use of other teachers providing support periods when their schedule allows. We have moved around our IRT's schedule in order to accommodate these interventions as well. Some student progress has been made, yet not as much as we would have liked.

-As of April 2023, we have began a pilot project in the combination of grades for math games. Our grade 4 and 5 students get together twice a cycle and are grouped according to ability level. It is organized in a 'math day' way, where students answer questions on a certain topic and points are accumulated. In our TLT meetings, we decided to incorporate a numeracy groupings activity similar to our grades 1-5 guided reading sessions. We would begin with the 4's and 5's, then judge how we would incorporate grades 1-3 at a later date.

- Support periods from other teachers have been included in most teacher schedules, and have been all year.

Next Steps:

- -In september, we will look at the BEV document from the previous school year, as well as notes from previous TLT meetings, and look at the number of students who require numeracy interventions. We will also look at the IRT schedule to see how much time could be allotted for numeracy interventions.
- -We will continue our groupings activities for grades 4 and 5. We will also look at how we can include grades 1-3 in these activities. We are hoping it can look similar to our guided reading sessions.
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