

# 2023-2024 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 2023 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 2023, we decided as a school based planning team to focus on the collective efficacy and Evidence Based Decision making determinants. Concerns were raised on the way in which we are meeting the needs of the students in our building, which was a big factor in choosing the determinant listed above. We will be continuing our SBL - Standards Based Learning for the 2023-2024 school year.

This is the sixth 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 Positive School Climate (Staff), School Engagement (Student) as well as School Fit (Family). It is concerning that School Fit (Family) has dropped from very high to intermediate, and that STA has dropped 7.6 percentage points from 2022, and Positive School Climate (Staff) went down 22.8 percentage points from 2022. We at STA pride ourselves on creating a positive school culture, so this is why it is concerning that these three areas have decreased from the previous year. It is also surprising that school engagement has decreased, as according to our reading record tracker, 39/60 students from grades K-6 increased their reading level enough to be at grade level.

## Strategic Issue/Goal: Continue to 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 the Reading record tracker on STA Staff drive, 39/48, or 73% of students from K-6 reading below grade level. Our reading record tracker over the past calendar year has proven that through its use, we have seen a steady increase in the reading levels of all students from grades 1-6, much of this is in part to the guided reading sessions and the work all teachers put into teaching all students. 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.

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

- According to the Reading record tracker on STA Staff drive, 14/44, or 31% of students from K-6 are reading below grade level. This is a tremendous improvement from the beginning of the year. We've had 4 students transfer out of the school during this school year which is why we have dropped from 48 to 44 students. Of the 30 students who are reading at grade level, 4 are meeting the minimum requirements for that grade level. This means they are reading at the start of their grade level now and when they start in September, they will be reading below that grade's minimum grade level requirement. The 42% reduction in the number of students reading below grade level shows that the actions taken throughout the year, such as guided reading groups, have certainly been effective in increasing the accuracy and comprehension of our K-6 readers.
- -We did not have a literacy fair, but will look at it again next year.
-

- - Our guided reading sessions became stagnant over the course of the school year, with students becoming less engaged. We decided as a staff to change up the look of the guided reading sessions. For March and April, we would do an author study, and then for May and June, we would have a thematic unit. Students in grades 1-6 would choose which one they wanted to attend. 2 teachers would aim their studies at certain age levels to account for the grade level difference. This increased the motivation of students to attend the guided reading sessions and this certainly impacted the reading levels of students in term 3.

### **Next Steps...**

- Continue 3:15, TLT, and staff meetings.
- With the loss of the reading specialist, our RS collab periods will not be able to occur next year.
- We plan on continuing with our guided reading sessions, but as we have been given a reduction in our teaching allocation for the upcoming school year, we will have to rethink how this will look going into September.
- Look into guided numeracy sessions, but is looking unlikely as a result of our reduction in allocations.
- Mr. Ivany has done a fantastic job using google forms to gather everyone's opinions throughout the school year.

## **Strategic Issue/ Goal: Increase Evidence Based Decision Making**

**Objective: Evidence based decision making: An effective school, operating as a professional learning community, consists of teams of educators working together to review, analyze and interpret data with a view to provide an organized plan for learning.**

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

According to our PMF data, our stats for positive school climate for staff has decreased by 22.8 points to 68.6. This is in the intermediate range as compared to 2019 results. Through a google form survey shared with staff, data from this survey pointed to the fact that not everyone is in agreement on what the needs of the students are. There are a lot of statements from staff in general conversations being made that are not fully evidence based. There are a lot of people making observations and stating opinions that may or may not be

based on the collection and analysis of valid data. Our reading record tracker over the past calendar year has proven that through its use, we have seen a steady increase in the reading levels of all students from K-6. According to our PMF data, our list of major behaviours has increased by 195.6 to 374.7. This is very high in comparison to 2019 levels. We need to track data in relation to behaviours so that we can better deal with those behaviours as a staff.

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

**As of June 12, 2024, 346 major behaviour incidents have been reported in review 360. Our student assistants, who do not have access to review 360, have been given a link to a google form where they can track behaviours they see worth noting, and our IRTs put them into the system. Using our 315 meetings, teachers have met (speaking about a single student at a time) discussing 14 different students at least 4 times since the implementation of these meetings. Over the course of the school year, the number of incidents have decreased per month, with 128 in October, and 43 in November. In April, 7 were reported and in May, 22 were reported. It seems that through the use of the 3:15 meetings, teachers have collaborated to engage and motivate students which led to decreased undesired behaviours that would ultimately lead to a more positive school environment.**

- **Did not use ABC charts, but used google forms documenting strengths and needs during 3:15 meetings.**
- **Currently there are 49 RTL forms (literacy, numeracy, and SEL) as noted on our RTL master list. Our reading levels have increased, with only 14/44 students reading below grade level. The SEL RTLs have led to decreased undesired behaviours, as noted in our 360 report.**
- **The Accommodations master list has been an integral part of our IRTs ensuring all students can achieve their personal best.**

### **Next Steps:**

- **Continue the use of 3:15 meetings**
- **Continue the use of RTL master form**
- **Continue to use the Accommodations master list**
- **Continue the use of reading record tracker. For this year, each term would have had listed the accuracy and comprehension for both the independent and instructional levels for each student. Next year, we will only include the instructional level. This will reduce the amount of extraneous data and**

**make it more user friendly.**