



Celebrating Safe Positive Schools

Our school project was a [School Student Retreat](#).

How did you do it?

Our Religion Committee and our Safe and Positive Schools representative decided to combine two of the goals found on our Learning Improvement Plan. The first was to promote faith formation among our students and the second was to decrease the amount of behavioral incidents among our students. One of the strategies was to provide our students with a focus and a vision. We accomplished this by giving our students the opportunity to participate in a student retreat. Our retreat theme focused on the “The Year of St. Paul” and the Gospel values “Love and Respect”.

Who was involved?

Our Religion Committee and our Safe and Positive Schools representative collaboratively planned the student retreat. Judy Timmermans and Erin Gratton provided sessions for our primary students while teachers provided sessions for our middle years students. Elizabeth Yonza, a local artist, provided all of our students the opportunity to paint a part of our St. Paul mosaic.

What was the impact for students, staff, or your community?

Students and staff members alike learned about St. Paul, his conversion and his dedication to sharing the Good News. Learning about the life of St. Paul has given our students the ability to identify times they struggle making positive choices. Staff can now easily use St. Paul as an example of a person who did overcome many challenges during his faith journey to give hope to all of our students, especially those who struggle the most.

It looked like this . . .

As a follow-up to our student retreat, we are encouraging students, staff and parents to “catch” others displaying one of the above-mentioned Gospel values. Our mosaic painting is a constant reminder that we all need to work together as we journey towards knowing Jesus Christ. Teachers continue to explicitly teach students from our Second Step program. We continue to intentionally create opportunities for parents to become more visible and involved within the school (parent/student hot lunch day, parent/student sports events, Christmas Family Night, Movie Nights). As we collect and analyze our data on student behaviors, we have noticed a considerable decrease in inappropriate behaviors.

The attached 3 pictures are:

- Two of our bulletin boards where small notes describing peoples’ actions are displayed for all to celebrate. *Love/Respect* was our focus from September to November and we are currently working on *Community*. *Faith* will guide our activities during the last part of the school year.
- Our Mosaic painting created during our Student retreat

