

August 29, 2008

It Makes Sense!

① A Note from Dr. Lasmanis ~

The steps to excellence of citizenship.

Good citizenship requires citizens to have good behavior, and good behavior can only come about when everyone not only shares the same understanding of what constitutes good behavior but accepts it as their own set of standards for how they behave. All of that boils down to the quality of one's character. **Character is displayed by what we do when no-one is watching!**

There are a number of steps that lead to the development of good character. It is our goal that by the time SENSE students complete sixth grade they will have reached that final step of having a personal code of behavior that reflects the shared values of good citizenship. Everyone has a set of core values that direct their behavior and those values can be good or bad – they can represent what is right and just or they can represent what is wrong and unjust. **Personal core values, good ones and bad ones, will drive – not influence – personal behavior.**

There is a **progression of “core values”** that leads a person to doing what is right and just when no one is watching. It is a five step process and with each successive step or level encompassing the preceding ones; it is a building process.

The **first level** is to do what is right to **avoid getting in trouble**. That is the beginning of forming good character in children. They learn there are negative consequences to doing what is wrong. And as we all know, at that level, kids will work very hard to make sure that no one know what they did!

The **second level** is that of **good consequences for good behavior**. The driving core value now is that of a reward – I “get” something I want if I behave.

As parents and educators we can get stuck at this level. If they are doing what is good, even if it is just for a reward, they are not doing what is bad! The trouble with staying at this level is that pretty soon we start running out of rewards!

In the **third level** we move from the tangible to the less tangible – from stuff to feelings. If our kids behave we show appreciation – not with things, but with words and emotions. At

this level the core value is **to please someone!** But, how I behave is still driven by how someone else responds to what I do. So if no one is watching, does it really matter?

The **fourth level** is one of simply **following the rules**. It is less directly dependent on other people, but it still requires the surroundings to define how one should behave in any given situation.

From being rule driven we move to the **fifth level**: a core value of being **considerate of other people**. My actions are driven by how what I do will affect other people. A very important core value for good citizenship.

The **last level** is one that we continue to develop for the rest of our lives and never complete: a set of **core values that are based on right and wrong, just and unjust**. Core values to which we are willing to commit not only our actions, but, if need be, our lives as well.

Level six is excellence and excellence is the journey, not the destination.


JC Lasmanis

REMINDERS

**NO SCHOOL – Labor Day
Monday, September 1st**

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2 NEWS & REMINDERS**NO SCHOOL – Labor Day, Monday, September 1.****ISTEP Reminder:**

ISTEP testing begins on Monday, September 15th and ends on Friday, September 26th. Please do not schedule appointments during this time. It is very important that your child is at school on these days. Also, there will be no interruptions during this testing so parents will not be allowed in the classrooms and phone calls will go directly to voice mail.

Lice Checks:

If your student is sent home with lice by the school nurse, school policy requires that the student be re-checked by the school nurse before they can return to their class. A parent or guardian must escort that student to the nurse.

Students will not be allowed to return to class without a parent or guardian present.

Classroom Visits:

Teachers and students have now settled back into the school year routine. They are now about the very serious work of learning new material and sharpening old skills.

We invite you to visit us whenever your schedule allows. If at all possible, please contact us with your arrival date and time so we can better accommodate you. Of course, lunch is also a good time to visit your student at school. Come and join them for lunch!

Safety is FIRST!

- Any parent and/or visitor entering the school building **MUST** always check in at the front office first.
- Parents dropping off student(s) in the morning, prior to school starting, must walk their student(s) into the cafeteria.
- For the safety of our students and staff, all parents and visitors must check in at the front office.

More Shirts Please

Thank you to those people who have generously donated shirts as smocks to the art department. We still need more though. Please bring any and all extra shirts you may have. Thank you very much!

③

News From the Art Department:

Several months ago friends of mine who work for Venogram LLC, a video production company, asked me if I would help them shoot a commercial at SENSE School for a local film festival, the *2008 Annual Campechne Film Festival*, September 26 through September 27, at the Indianapolis Museum of Art (IMA). This year's theme for the film festival is "From Invisible to Invincible" and will showcase videos created by upper elementary students. The students were supported in this endeavor by a partnership among Venogram LLC, the Latino Youth Collective and FIRME Productions. These organizations collectively created a process that "engages young people in: 1). Identifying a community issue of concern to them; 2), investigating its causes and potential solutions through the use of inquiry methods and media technology; and 3) then uses the resulting videos for education, community action and/or policy change."

The commercial depicts the festival theme "From Invisible to Invincible" through three scenes in each of which an individual who might easily blend into the background of our society breaks out into the foreground. One scene will depict a woman in a grocery store, a second a janitor in an office building, and finally, the scene shot at SENSE, a fifth grade girl making a movie about her classroom. At the conclusion of each scene, the main character rips off a black ski masks and declares his/her invincibility. It was for this last scene that Venogram LLC, needed a classroom and 4th and 5th grade students as extras for the class. A letter sent out to our 4th and 5th grade families generated an excellent response. About ten of our students, along with parents, came to school last Saturday morning to participate in the shoot.

This Saturday morning was a wonderful opportunity for the students to not only help create a commercial and but also see first hand the movie-making process. Most of the students had never participated in making a movie, yet all performed fantastically. They experienced first hand the not-so glamorous aspects of film production as well. They were required to ignore bright lights, a large camera, a long microphone on a stick, and film crew workers moving around all the time, while they pretended to be in a regular class.

I was fortunate to work with such good student "actors" since I played the roll of their teacher. Having a little experience in film production myself, I along with the production company personnel were highly impressed with the ability of these students to listen, follow directions, and perform the first time when they were asked. Despite numerous takes of scenes where the students had to display more energy or less energy and look like students in a real class, they stayed on task, persevered with good humor and were magnificent.

Not only did I appreciate the students' participation, but was grateful for the patience of the parents who allowed their kids to appear in this project, and ended up spending a longer time at SENSE than had been anticipated – but that is filmmaking!. Thank you students and parents! I will keep you posted as to when and where the commercial will be broadcast.

3 Photos From the Art Department:

Film crew workers for Venogram LLC work to light the classroom scene with SENSE Students.



4th Grade Student Robert Phillips waits for next take during the commercial shoot.

Sergio Rojas, Sabrina Marcum, Kristian Kostrzewski, Bailey Mitchell, and Paige Kostrzewski prepare to act like students engaged in an interesting lesson.



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PTO SURVEY:



SENSE Charter School PTO: CALL OUT

As we begin another year at SENSE Charter School, a community based school; much of the focus is on involving the parents, families, community services and businesses within our neighborhoods. In order to fulfill our role it takes the active recruiting of the many people devoted to our school and that includes YOU! We all have talents, skills and capabilities that can serve our school, students and community organizations.

Please complete the survey below!

Let us know how you would like to take part in our PTO.

Please return this page to the school by Friday, 9/5/08

-Circle All That Apply-

1.) I would like to serve on the PTO Board. YES NO MAYBE

2.) I am able to attend meeting and/or offer volunteer hours. YES NO MAYBE
(PTO Meetings are once a month for 1 hour)

3.) I would be interested in helping out with some of the current PTO duties: YES NO MAYBE

4.) Please provide any information on particular days or times of the day that are best for you to attend PTO meetings.

Mondays

Tuesdays

Wednesdays

Thursdays

Fridays

Saturdays

Mornings _____

School Hours

Late Afternoons _____

Evenings _____

Anytime

5.) Here is my personal information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone#: _____ Best time to call: _____

6.) Please call me the day before a SENSE PTO meeting and if I am able to attend, I will:

YES

NO

MAYBE