



PRINCIPAL CORNER for April 18th
Engagement

Essential Conditions for Engagement in the classroom include a variety of welcoming places to work; the pull of the books invitingly displayed that make kids want to grab one; the way the children move around the room independently, efficiently, and productively; and the way they interact with one another joyfully. The teacher is likely ensconced with a child or small group, or with all of them caught up in the world of becoming the kind of people who bring positive change to the world (Engaging Children: Igniting a Drive for Deeper Learning, p. 36, 2018).

I could easily have written this exact quote above based on my regular classroom observations. I use the *Instructional Growth and Teacher Evaluation Rubric* from the University of Washington Center for Educational Leadership.

I have attended multiple professional development sessions with my principal colleagues at various Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Seattle. We have practiced the observation tool in many classrooms, including a Freshman Algebra class at O'Dea.

Our specific focus areas from the rubric are **Student Engagement and Purpose**. Teachers choose one goal from the Student Engagement rubric and we have a shared schoolwide goal from the Purpose rubric: Lessons are connected to previous and future lessons, broader purpose and transferable skill.

Engaging children as we do at SCCS doesn't just happen magically. We are very intentional about our work. The conditions we create are mindfully planned and repeatedly shared during our Thursday afternoon Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings to provide optimal learning in every classroom.

With respect,
Susan Kilbane