

PRINCE Leadership MONTHLY



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Good, Better, Best

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Good, Better, Best
Never let it rest,
Until your good is your Better,
And your better is your Best.

Any student at Prince that has played sports for Coach Bell or had him in a class has heard the saying above. Most parents of those students have heard it recited, and we even have a t-shirt with it emblazoned on the back. It is a great motivational slogan for athletes that challenges them to continue working harder no matter their ability or performance level. Athletes that work to make their "good" skills "better" and their "better" skills the "best" usually can easily see the results. Proper conditioning and weight training makes one faster and stronger. Proper practice of skills for a specific sport results in the ability to perform at a higher level and a greater speed.

Students and teachers are putting forth great effort to make "good" "better" and "better" best" in academics also. Evaluating the effectiveness of that effort is sometimes harder to see. However, we do have indicators that our students are able to perform better academically also.

For several years, students from Kindergarten to 9th grade have taken the Terra Nova achievement test in April. Each year, we evaluate those scores, and each year our "good" is getting "better". Our lowest percentile scores (which are significantly above average) are getting higher. While the number of percentile scores that are above the ACSI average (Christian schools with similar students, values, and mission) is growing each year, the number of percentile scores that are significantly below the ACSI average has dropped to zero.

Select groups of students also participate in academic competitions such as the ACSI Geography bee, Spelling bee, and Math Olympics. We participated in these events recently and placed well in each competition. We had six of sixteen participants place in the top four of the spelling bee with two first place winners, ten of twelve place in the geography bee with a first place winner in all three grade levels, and twelve of eighteen place in the Math Olympics. These students spend time after school and at home practicing their skills in order

to become better in the academic areas that are of interest to them.

Each year, many of our high school students take the PSAT in October in order to prepare for future college entrance exams. Chase Deatrick was recognized last year as a National Merit Semi-finalist for having scored in the top 1% of the 1.6 million juniors that took the test in the fall of 2015. Two other students (Robert West and Macy Frazier) were recognized as Commended Students. Chase was recently notified that he is recognized as a National Merit Finalist, a significant achievement that will afford him scholarship funds as he continues striving to learn.

Each year, many students choose to take advanced placement courses that will allow them to receive college credit if their score on the AP test in May is recognized by the school they attend. Last year, 8 students were recognized by the College Board, the organization that provides and scores AP exams, for their outstanding scores on 3 or more AP exams in their high school career.

These are some examples, but I believe that there are many more examples of our students working diligently to make their "good" into "better" or "better" into "best". Ultimately, the fact that one is striving to improve is more critical to future success than raw ability. Our desire at Prince is for all students to strive for perfection even though it is unattainable in this world.

