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Weather station teaches students more than wind, rain and snow

by Laura Freeman, Reporter

Hudson, NY - Students are learning firsthand about the bountiful February snowfall from Seton Catholic School's weather station.

Seton obtained a WeatherBug weather station through a grant from the Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation in 2008, according to Seton Communications Manager Patricia Fritz.

The weather station includes a camera on the front of the school building that shows what is going on outside. Anyone can view the weather statistics and see the camera's broadcast on the school's Web site at www.setoncatholicsschool.org.

"The camera on the front of the building shows Stow Road and conditions in the front of the building," Fritz said. "It tracks the weather conditions at its most visible points."

A wind sensor and rain gauge are near the back of the building, Fritz said.

"We wanted children to have live data here at school and incorporate it into the curriculum," Fritz said.

The weather station provides a foundation in math, geography, science and technology that can be used on a daily basis, Fritz said. It allows the students to be real-life scientist.

The weather station is used by all the grades kindergarten through eighth grade.

Feb. 9 - Jackie Palumbo's kindergarten class tracked the snow storm heading into Summit County and recorded the progress of wind, temperature and snowfall.

"It brings hands-on work and visuals to weather that is happening around school and home," Palumbo said. "It makes them aware of what is going on around in their surroundings."

Palumbo said kindergarten students learn about weather basics that are added to in the upper grades.

"In January we talked about the three forms of matter -- liquid, solid and gas," Palumbo said. "Water can be each of those three states of matter, and we talked about water freezing to a solid."



Photo by Record Publishing Co. Seton Catholic School kindergarten student Sean McMullin demonstrates the intensity of the snow approaching Hudson using the weather station at the school.

Palumbo said the lesson incorporates temperature and current weather.

"Part of science is using different means of measuring, and the thermometer is on the weather station site," Palumbo said.

Dr. Anne Schoeffler teaches science in sixth, seventh and eighth grade. In her seventh-grade meteorology class, she uses real-time data to do weather forecasting.

"Students can see if the textbook information matches real data collected," Schoeffler said. "It shows real-life situations."

Schoeffler said students spend six to eight weeks on meteorology, covering weather forecasting and basic science and how it affects them.

Students also incorporate computer skills to organize and analyze data, she added.

"All the grades have weather units, so it is used within the curriculum," Fritz said.

Parents and members of the community can check the site for weather conditions and predictions, she said.

The weather station is one of only a few in Summit County, Fritz said. The Akron-Summit County Public Library also has a weather station with a camera. Twinsburg High School and Old Trail School in Bath have weather stations but no cameras.

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