

# Board report

Anton Borst

*Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior,  
and my hope is in you all day long.*

Psalm 25:5

Hello All,

The above prayer is what Dufferin Christian School is all about. The Lord continues to bless the school in many ways whether it is through providing staff or the financial means to run the school or the great parental support we enjoy. Let us be thankful for all He has done.

Spring break is almost over already! I hope this means that most of winter is behind us. I wonder how time can go so fast while winter takes sooo long?

First, a general board report. The board has kept busy the last month with various issues. This time of year always seems to revolve around staffing. It looks like we are in very good shape in this regard for next year as the board would like to welcome Blaine Vandermeulen to the staff of Dufferin Christian School. Blaine is just wrapping up his Education at the University of Manitoba this year. Welcome Mr. Vandermeulen!! I doubt that you will have difficulty adjusting to the school maybe it will just feel a little strange being on the other side of the desk.

In other staffing news as you may be aware Mrs. Jellie VanKammen has indicated that she will not be returning to DCS this fall. That is why the board has been advertising to fill the Resource Teacher position. There are some applications also for this position so there is hope that this position can also be filled. The board would like to thank Jellie for her years of dedicated service to DCS. Jellie has taken the special needs program to a whole new level at DCS and has set the bar high for her replacement. Thank you for your dedication.

In the next little while the school board will be reviewing and extending the paraprofessional staffing contracts. It may at times be tempting to take these staff members for granted but they do very important work and DCS cannot do without them. The paraprofessional staff provides a valuable service in supporting the teaching staff and in supporting students that need some one on one attention.

In regards to the school building the board has met with the Vision committee who has come up with some ideas in regards to building expansion. The board has asked the committee to develop the ideas further and to get some ideas as to cost, feasibility etc. and to bring this back to the board.

Now a short Treasurer report:

I would like to update you, the membership, on all the membership or donation payment options that are available to you. We have just completed setting up for automatic withdrawal. This is an option some of you have been asking for. So here is a list of the different ways you can make your membership or donation contribution.

1. Automatic bank withdrawal. This will happen on the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month. You need to fill out a form to get this set up. Send an email to myself at [dcstreasurer@mts.net](mailto:dcstreasurer@mts.net) or you can call me at 436-2032 and I will forward the form to you to fill in.
2. Telephone or Internet banking. You can pay your dues by phone or online if you bank at the CIBC or Access Credit Union. Your account number is 4 digits long – add zeroes to the front of your envelope number. For example, if your envelope number is 4, your account number is 0004.
3. Cheques. You can still pay your dues by cheque just as you always have in the past. Postdated cheques for the whole year are also gratefully accepted.
4. Cash. While it happens only rarely, we really prefer not to get any payments with cash money. If you do pay by cash, please mark the amount either directly on the envelope, or on a slip of paper and put it in the envelope. This makes it easier to double-check donation amounts at the end of the year.

I hope this clarifies matters for those who had questions. If you have further question please feel free to call or email me. Thank you all for your continued support and I wish you a blessed Sunday.

## Principal's report

Andy Huisman

*“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.”*

*1 Peter 4:10*

DCS is a vibrant place with many things taking place on a daily basis. One really only needs to walk into the building to sense the vibrancy, to sense that this is a place where things are happening. However, in all of the hustle and bustle of life in the classrooms, the hallways and the playground, we dearly hold onto one vitally important fact - God is in control. We may not understand all of the issues that our children face on a daily basis, but we do know that God is in control. DCS is a parental school and as such forms one part of the triangle of Church, Home and School. DCS strives to provide an environment where His way is upheld, His word is honoured and His love is shared. God's love surrounds us daily. It

is always the hope and prayer that what we are trying to accomplish at DCS is to help educate children so that they will grow up into discerning, caring individuals who see their purpose is to serve God.

When I reflect on the words of 1 Peter 4:10 - *"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms"* quite a number of things come to my mind. I think of all of that takes place on a daily basis at DCS – how not only the staff but the students and volunteers also use their gifts for the benefit of all involved at DCS. I would just like to share a small glimpse inside the doors of DCS with you:

- Kindergarten – It is amazing how each of the students are progressing. Miss Stad has specifically commented on the students' reading ability and how they have grown so much since the first day of school. We also welcome Miss Stad to Carman as a resident – she will soon be moving here and I am sure that she is looking forward to only having to driving 5 minutes to work, especially in the winter.
- Grade One – One very specific item that was mentioned by Mr. Vanderhooft was the appreciation to Mrs. Gear for all of her help with the skating program this year. The new skaters have really developed quite the skills. On another note (no pun intended) the 4 – 6 choir has been invited to perform at two special occasions in town in the coming months: the SAFE Communities Designation Celebration evening and the Volunteer Appreciation evening.
- Grade Two – One exciting venture in the grade two classroom was the discovery that you can make really neat vehicles out of junk – and they actually can roll down ramps. I am sure that these priceless treasures are now stored in your child's room
- Grade Three – I know from past experience that a very exciting time is coming up for the grade three's. They will soon be working on their poetry unit in anticipation of the annual Poetry Cafe that their class always holds. Please keep an eye out on upcoming newsletters for more details.
- Grade Four – In conjunction with the theme of Reading Month, the grade fours have recently compiled a very exciting book entitled "Medieval Times". It contains reports from the students on various aspects of life during those days. It will be available next week on the school website.
- Grade Five – This class is very much into puzzles. They love it when Mrs. Vandermeulen or the students hide the vocabulary words throughout the school. Even the janitor knows about their love for puzzles. Mr. DeWit often brings a jigsaw puzzle to this class that they may work on in their spare time. However, Mr. DeWit really likes to puzzle as well so he sometimes will keep the last piece so that he can put it in ☺. Thanks Mr. DeWit.
- Grade Six – Mr. Gunnink has informed me that this class really likes to build things. I think that one day they may all grow up to be engineers and architects. The class has recently completed a full sized 2-d version of the furniture of the Tabernacle. It took some pretty good math calculations, but it sure makes it easy to visualize the various pieces. I think that they will soon enjoy their next science unit – bridge-building. (hopefully on a scale model version though ☺)
- Grade Seven – For those of you who made it down to parent teacher interviews, you will have noticed some pretty interesting sculptures in the hallway outside the grade seven classroom.

This was not an easy task as they had to convey movement in a stationary object. The pictures are available for viewing on the website.

- Grade Eight – Where would we be without the grade 8 class? In addition to their everyday subjects, this class is also responsible for the recycling program within DCS. Thanks to them the bins are never overflowing. Thanks for that as many hands make light work.
- Paraprofessionals – Thanks for all that you do in helping every student achieve to their ability. Quite often you are working ‘in the background’ so to speak, but for all of you involved with the Special Needs and Learning Assistance we thank you for sharing the talents that God has given you in working with all of the children.
- Elementary Division – Thanks as well to the students who always keep the front entrance way boot racks neat and tidy. As well, thanks to the younger students who daily collect the attendance sheets from all of the classrooms. Thanks to the Student Council for organizing lots of interesting days that we all look forward to, such as “Twin Day”.
- High School – We move into the HS wing where there is never a dull moment. Mr. Raap is heavily involved in the sports program at DCS and I believe that elsewhere in this Beacon you will read a recap of the events of this year. Congratulations to Mr. Raap and the Senior Boy’s basketball team for achieving Bronze in the Provincial Basketball Finals. Mr. Hoogerdijk and Mrs. DeWit are working together with the students in Desktop Publishing and English to create their magazines. It is a real treat when learning activities such as this occur over the various classes. Mr. Ellens reports that there were some pretty exciting times in Biology when the students had to create various analogies for the function of a kidney. If you have a student in this class, ask them about it. Mrs. DeWit has also been busy with her art students in the creation of some murals for the hallways based on the theme of “Shining your Light”. These can be viewed on the website. Mr. Lodder has been busy studying Galatians in his Grade 12 Reformed Studies class. When they are done, they will have read the book at least 6 times, which prompted some to ask “Why do we need to read it six times?”, only to discover that they pretty much have it memorized by the sixth time. Good job! Mrs. J. Lodder is busy planning the upcoming Rotary Career Symposium for the senior students. This symposium takes place in Winnipeg on Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. Thanks also to the SALT group for organizing many activities within the school community. Your time and commitment are greatly appreciated. As for myself, the Senior Band is busy preparing for the upcoming concert to be held at the Carman-West church on Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to performing quite a number of new selections as well as performing together with the 4-6 choir.
- Parent Community – Words cannot express our appreciation for all that you contribute to DCS. There are so many volunteers that give of their time to help out in a variety of ways. Thank you!

## Other News

### High School Course Registration

You know that the year is really going by fast when you begin discussing next year's course registration. The information package will be sent home on Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. Course registration can sometimes be a confusing thing, especially for first-timers. In order to alleviate that confusion, there will be an information evening organized for Tuesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. As staff, we would really encourage you to attend this information evening. Does your child speak a second language at home? Perhaps they are competent in Dutch, German, or another language. Did you know that they can earn up to 4 High School Credits. How about music? Is your child currently taking private music lessons? Here too, they can earn extra credits for this work. Come to the information evening and find out how this works. There are many options available to our students and this will give you an opportunity to question and investigate. We look forward to seeing you on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

### High School Portfolio Project *(reprint with some updates)*

From time to time I have heard a variety of comments in regards to the High School Portfolio Project. ***For your information, the Portfolio document is available in its entirety on the school website.*** I would like to share some excerpts from the actual document and perhaps shed some light on common misconceptions. If you ever have a question and want to know the correct answer, please feel free to contact me.

- *Rationale of the Portfolio Project*

*"How can we assist our students to discover and nurture their talents so that they might use them to the service of God and their neighbour?"*

A high school discipleship portfolio is a physical or electronic collection of material that demonstrates a student's exploration and reflection of God-given talents that can be used in service to God and neighbour. This portfolio process, then, is designed to help students first of all to discover their talents and then secondarily to nurture them.

*"The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen." 1 Peter 4:7-12*

- *Overview of the Portfolio Project*

The portfolio project will be performed during the final four years at Dufferin Christian School, Grades 9 to 12. It is designed to be a 'work-in-progress' completed at the end of Grade 12. At that point, parents

must complete a reflection on their child's portfolio as well. This portfolio is compulsory for students. It is worth 1.0 credit towards graduation requirements.

Although the portfolio will add some work to the student's current load, the main elements of this portfolio may use artefacts from other high school courses. This may reduce the work somewhat although the reflections on these artefacts are still required and will not necessarily have been done in the courses.

- The portfolio is divided into five sections:

<b>Unit One:</b>	God's Calling for Me: God's Gifts to Me
<b>Unit Two:</b>	Exploring Opportunities: How Can I Fulfill My Calling?
<b>Unit Three:</b>	Preparing for a Changing World
<b>Unit Four:</b>	Annual Summaries (Grades 9-11): Seeing Who God Made Me to Be
<b>Unit Five:</b>	Graduation Summary (Grade 12): Who I Am and How I Have Grown

Students will use the five checklists (one for each unit) to guide them in choosing a variety of artefacts. These may include, but are not limited to essays, artwork, pictures of community involvement, etc. Each artefact must be accompanied by a reflection.

- **School and Community Service Hours Overview:**

A large part of the Portfolio Project is the *School and Community Service Hours*. Students may start to collect hours during the summer prior to Grade 9 entry. The service hours have a twofold purpose:

1 – Community Service: to expand students' awareness of the needs in their community, to challenge students to discover and develop their talents and interests through service, and to foster a sense of responsibility and accomplishment in our students that will encourage them toward an active life of service.

2 – Career Development: to explore learning opportunities and activities that assist students in deciding upon possible career paths. Students may also explore job-shadowing as a means to identify possible interests. Such time spent can also be applied towards a portion of the hours required. You will need to speak with the either Mr. Raap or Mrs. J. Lodder if you wish to pursue this option.

As a guide, all students will be required to complete 40 hours of service in school and another 40 hours of service in the larger community. It should be noted that there is some flexibility in this combination (a few hours either way) however, students need to realize that both components must be met. All students will be required to complete annual year end reflections. Ideally a student will make some progress in completing the 80 hours each year. Remember, students have four years to complete the project. And if you do the math that works out to two service hours per month, not counting summer break. (about the time it takes to watch a movie)

- *Eligible Activities – In-school Component*

When it comes to what are eligible activities, you are really only limited by your imagination (and a few other small details). It is easier to define what is ineligible. **Ineligible Activities are those that:**

- ✓ Pay the student
- ✓ Are done for credit in another course
- ✓ Are done within instructional time (please see condition below)

In light of the fact that volunteer opportunities sometimes arise during normal school hours and as such do not qualify towards the total number of hours needed, the following shall serve as a guide.

*Students may, on a case by case basis with the approval of the school administration, volunteer for events held by recognized organizations, provided the organization is within the realm of a career interest of the student. Prior to the administration consent, the student's teachers will be consulted in order to determine the student's current performance. If approval is given, it is the student's responsibility to meet with the teachers prior to the scheduled day of volunteer experience in order to coordinate a plan to complete all regular school work missed. It must be clearly understood that the onus is on the student to ensure that all school work is completed in a timely fashion. Administrative approval will not be given during any examination period.*

- *Eligible Activities – Out-of-school Component*

I have included an extensive but not exhaustible list of ideas. Not included in this list are activities for exploring career paths simply because there are so many opportunities to do so and those could not be contained in a list. If you have an idea for such an opportunity, or if you are unsure of the eligibility of an activity, simply contact the Principal for clarification.

#### *Suggested Activities*

- ✓ Community organizations (includes assisting with special events, food banks or things like Christmas Cheer Board, child care centre or day camp, MCC, ProLife, Siloam Mission, Partners and Pals)
- ✓ Community Projects (includes participating in food drives or supporting groups such as 4H clubs, Welcome Wagon, or Meals-on-Wheels)
- ✓ Sports (includes coaching, organizing special events)
- ✓ Health Agencies (includes volunteering at hospitals, blood donor clinics)
- ✓ Animal Care (includes volunteering in a vet clinic or animal shelter)
- ✓ Environmental projects (includes flower/tree planting, recycling projects)
- ✓ Fall Clean Up and/or a Spring Clean Up Day (includes advertising volunteer labour for people in the community who can book a number of labourers to do yard type work.)
- ✓ Not-for-Profit Agencies (includes organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, YFC Back Door)
- ✓ Support for Individuals with special needs (includes assistance to those in need with shopping, housekeeping, writing letters or transcribing, hospital visitation or chronic care, visiting the Boyne Lodge residents)
- ✓ Fundraising (includes participating in walk-a-thons, sales, or other fundraising events that benefit the community or charitable organizations)
- ✓ Committee Work (includes participating on advisory boards, neighbourhood associations and regional organizations).

- ✓ Office/Clerical Work (includes activities in reception, computer work and mailings for groups providing charitable or general community benefit)
- ✓ Church Related Activities (Organize FYSH activities, Vacation Bible School, Evangelism Committee)
- ✓ Mission Trips

***Ineligible Activities involve:***

- ✓ Playing on a sports team
- ✓ Extra-curricular school activities
- ✓ Duties normally performed by a paid employee or chores normally done at home
- ✓ Those that involves the operation of a vehicle, power tools, or scaffolding (liability issues)
- ✓ Those that involve the administration of medication or medical procedure
- ✓ Those that involve banking, securities, or other valuables
- ✓ Those hours required by a court-ordered community service program
- ✓ Those a student has not been trained to perform safely (i.e. electrical work)

As you can see, there are many opportunities for our students to develop, nurture and grow in their service to God and their neighbour. This project should not be seen as a daunting task but rather as a natural extension of the mission of DCS – *“for living a life of Christian discipleship in contemporary society”*.

***High School Portfolio Exit Meetings***

As we draw near to the end of the school year, the grade 12’s portfolio projects are coming to a close. There are 2 components that the grade 12’s must complete before receiving credit for this project. They must:

1. Hand in their completed working portfolios no later than **May 10**.
  - This would include all artefacts which fulfill all criteria. This would also include their community and school volunteer hours.
2. Exit Strategy interviews during the week of **May 23 – 27**.
  - Exit strategy interviews will be an opportunity for students to share with the resource teacher, other high school staff and administration their final project. The final exit strategy interview would include:
    - Describes what you have learned about your styles and talents
    - Indicates ways in which your talents can be used to serve God and our neighbour
    - Identifies and explains the direction you will pursue in a career
    - Manifest discoveries about God’s plan for you

That brings me to the end of my report. Again, as a parental school, DCS is firmly committed to working with you in the education of your children. If you ever have a question, comment or a concern, we would greatly appreciate hearing from you. Enjoy your Sunday.

***“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms”***     1 Peter 4:10

# Stingers Athletics

Another season of basketball season has come to an end; it seems like only a short time ago that we started basketball practices. Congratulations to both the girls and boys teams for successful seasons. They represented our school wonderfully throughout the year!



**A big thank-you to Anje Jager and Nikki Kooiker who coached the girls this year, the many hours you dedicated to the girls is appreciated by all!**

There are so many 'thanks' that need to go out as we have finished this season, most importantly we give thanks that our Heavenly Father has granted us His travelling mercies throughout this year and has kept all athletes free from major injury. Thanks to the parents and drivers who continue to support the basketball program, to our fans who continue to fill our gym and opposing gyms, and thanks to the many students who volunteered their time running the score clock for home games.

There were a few firsts this year, the boys won their first zone banner, and also made it to provincials for the first time. The boys did very well representing our school at provincials and even finished 3<sup>rd</sup>. Congratulations goes to Garrett Hillmer who was also named athlete of the week earlier this month as well as Provincial All-star.

This year we ran a shortened 7/8 basketball club as well for both the boys and girls teams. The boys and girls both travelled to ICS for tournaments as well as the boys played an exhibition game with West-park. Thanks to those coaches (Janae Hillmer, Richard Lodder and Devin Veenendaal) who have dedicated many hours into developing the skills of these athletes.

We are also running a 5/6 basketball club for the boys, we are once again invited by Carman elementary to have a tournament for these boys. The tournament will take place on April 29, and the boys will have 7 noon hour practices to prepare for this tournament, practices will start on April 4<sup>th</sup>. Their coach is Garrett Hillmer, please call Michael Raap (745-3445) if your son is planning to attend and that way Garrett can have an idea of how many athletes he will have.

We are also heading into badminton season once we are back from spring break. Mr. Lodder will be coaching the JV team and Mr. Raap will be coaching the varsity team. Practices start on April 4<sup>th</sup> after school for both teams. If your son/daughter is planning on playing badminton this year, they should be looking to purchase their own racquet. We are also hosting Badminton Provincials this year with Elm Creek, Miami and Carman Collegiate this will take place on May 6 and 7<sup>th</sup>.



# *Habits of Mind*

Liz DeWit

When the children were little, my husband and I would often go out with them on a Sunday walk along the dusty gravel road. That stretch of sameness would turn into an adventure of magnificent rock discoveries, amazing butterflies, birds that just had to be identified, bugs, crickets and even the occasional toad. It was fun, and, just lately, I have discovered that it was much more than that.

I have been reading in the book Habits of Mind by Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick which explores a range of habits that we use when we are confronted by a problem, when we have to learn something new, or even when we go into a new situation. Those habits help us to appreciate the beauty and wonder of God's creation, they help us to listen, to think, to problem solve, to take responsible risks, and to communicate with others.

Let's go back to the walk. What really was going on? A child can make any walk long because each step of the way has to be investigated. Rocks have different shapes and sometimes cool colours, dusty little flowers struggle to survive in the hard packed soil, a bird sings brightly overhead. The child responds with awe and wonderment, gathers data through his senses, poses problems to you, the parent, and listens to your explanation. The child thinks about what you told him or her, and often comes up with an associated idea that amazes you, the parent. Check the chart of habits of mind that is shown with this article and see how many life-long learning skills are introduced or reinforced during that casual parent-child activity.



Yes, we all have to be lifelong learners and that learning happens via the habits that we picked up as a child and that were reinforced as we went to school, participated in activities, worked with our parents, went on nature walks during family holidays, and listened to the minister on Sundays.

The habits of mind I am talking about are listed as follows:

- Persisting
- listening with understanding and empathy
- thinking about your thinking (remember Mr. Gunnink's article a few months ago)
- questioning and posing problems
- thinking and communicating with clarity and precision
- creating, imagining and innovating

- taking responsible risks
- thinking interdependently
- managing impulsivity
- thinking flexibly
- striving for accuracy
- applying past knowledge to new situations
- gathering data through all senses
- responding with wonderment and awe
- finding humour
- remaining open to continuous learning

I just want to look, with you, at a couple of these habits, the first of these, “listening with understanding and empathy”. Yes, we think we are listening, but just look at these distracters and see if they don’t apply to you.

- a. Our mind picks up one of the ideas and we begin to compare, distracting ourselves.
- b. We begin to read the mind of the other person, think about what he is going to say, and actually miss what he actually said.
- c. We are so busy preparing our next response, we lose the thread of what is being said.
- d. We pay attention only to the things with which we agree or disagree and sort of lose the rest.
- e. We listen with prejudice and automatically wipe out what we don’t agree with.
- f. We half listen and day dream.
- g. We begin to think about our own experience with the topic the speaker is presenting.
- h. We are busy thinking of a solution to the problem being presented and stop listening.
- i. We know we are right so we twist what we heard or make excuses to avoid being wrong.
- j. We’re bored with the detail or uncomfortable so we change the topic.
- k. We just automatically express agreement to avoid confrontation or to end the topic.
- l. We begin to ask detailed, irrelevant questions and lose the topic through the detail.

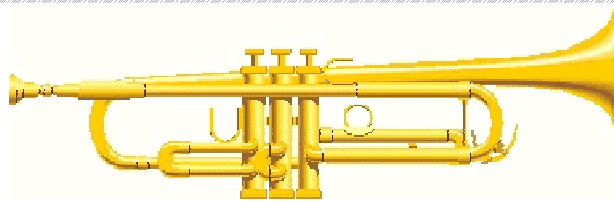
Guilty, right! Listening is hard work, and much time must be spent forming good listening habits. This calls for persistence.

Another interesting one is “Gathering Data Through all Senses”. The senses are like buttons; they can be pushed by experiences from the outside world. When our senses are dull, our thinking is dull. Just consider, 90 % of our sensory input comes through our eyes, but, we have to train our eyes and minds to actually see and register what is in front of us. In art class in one of the elementary grades in the past, I had the students draw a tree, then we went outside and actually looked at a tree and drew it. The

difference in the drawings was amazing. So often, we do not really see what we are looking at. That means that we also miss much of the awe we should have for God's work in creation since we never truly saw it. Feeling is another sense through which we absorb many impressions, yet try to describe in words what things feel like, sandpaper, silk, ice, your cat. Harder yet is to describe accurately the sounds we hear, and to single out particular sounds. Smell brings to mind the earth after rain, Saturdays in the kitchen and lunches forgotten in a locker. Taste, sweet, sour, salty, and bitter applies to food, but also to the breeze at the lake, the dust along the road, the walk through the woods. Learning involves all of these senses, and, it never stops.

Finally, we need to be able to laugh at ourselves, to appreciate the unexpected, and to humbly admit that we have much to learn and experience, whatever our age.

God has given us an awesome world, awesome gifts, and an awesome task. He has also given us an amazing set of tools to use, our habits of mind. We need to strive to truly use those gifts, to make it a habit.



# **DCS Band Concert**

**Friday, April 8, 2011  
at Carman West Church – 8:00 p.m.  
Everyone welcome!**

## **High School Parent Information Evening**

**The topic is Course Registration  
Grade 9-12 (2011-12 school year)  
Tuesday, April 12, 2011 – 8:00 p.m. at DCS**