

Abbotsford Christian School, operated by Abbotsford Christian School Society members, seeks to serve Christian families by providing a secure learning environment in which God's children can continue to explore, experience and evaluate all of life under God. We aim to nurture students in the discovery and development of their abilities and unique gifts so that they are enabled to be faithful, discerning, obedient and creative servants of God and of neighbour, and stewards of His creation.



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And much more!

**First Day
of School
TUESDAY,
Sept. 7th**

**ACS
ANNUAL
AUCTION**

Oct. 16th
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**PARENT
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**See the
2010/11
School
Calendar
of Events
on our
website.**

"Grow in the grace and
knowledge of our Lord and
Saviour, Jesus Christ."
II Peter 3:18

ACS Elementary (P-5)
Roy van Eerden, *Principal*
604 755 8101

ACS Middle (6-8)
Tym Berger, *Principal*
604 755 8102

ACS Secondary (9-12)
Rob Bakker, *Principal*
604 755 8104

Administration Office
Julius Siebenga, *Executive
Director* 604 755 8103

Administration Office
Nilah Lewis, *Admin Assistant*
604 755 1891 ext 4001

GENERAL ACS NEWS

From the Board Chair



Greetings ACS Society members. On behalf of your Abbotsford Christian School Board, I'd like to welcome all of you to a new and exciting school year. We trust and hope you've all had a wonderful and restful summer vacation. A special welcome to families and staff who are new to Abbotsford Christian School. We fully expect you to feel a warm and engaging welcome from the ACS community.

Before we look forward to a new school year, I want to briefly look back at the previous school year by acknowledging four board members whose terms have concluded and who we, as a board, said our good byes to at our June Board meeting. I want to publically thank Jim McGrail and Rick Bomhof who both completed their three year term. Both served ACS well, as thoughtful contributors at the board table and as members of the nomination committee. Rick also served as Vice Chair of the Board this past year. A special thank you also goes to Daryl Verbeek. After resigning as ACS's first Executive Director following three years of service, Daryl joined the board for a one year term for the sole purpose of supporting Julius Siebenga as his successor. This allowed for a smooth transition both within the operations of ACS and around the board table. It was a pleasure to see Daryl come full circle, back as a board member, where he was for several years prior to his appointment as the Executive Director of ACS. We thank Daryl for his flexibility, for his faithfulness to God's call, and for his service. Finally, I want to acknowledge and give thanks to Bernie Huizing who completed his second consecutive three year term. Bernie provided expertise as we transitioned to a new governance model, he served on the board executive as Secretary till he handed over the reins last year, and he chaired the nominations committee. Bernie's wise counsel at the board table will be missed. On behalf of the ASC Society, we thank the four of you for your faithful service to God by answering His call to serve Him in this way.

Now we look forward to a new school year. This year, one of the boards primary focuses will be gauging the progress and success of our Strategic Plan. It is important for the board to know if we are progressing towards accomplishing the vision we established in the 6 domains: Education, Staff, Finances, Community, Christian Worldview and Infrastructure. The board recently approved a strategic plan "report card" developed by Berta Den Haan for the board, designed to measure the success of the initiatives in our strategic plan. We, as a board, continue to pray for, and encourage our staff who are the primary instruments of the strategic plan and most of its initiatives. All of our efforts by both Board and staff, are intended to push ACS to be all that we can be and to be true to the Mission of ACS.

Blessings to all of you as we begin a new school year.

Eric Van Egmond - ACS Board Chair

THE ACS SCHOOL BOARD

2010-2011 School Year

ACS Board Members

- Eric Van Egmond* *Chair Person*
- Ian Van Deventer* *Vice Chair*
- Gord Braun* *Treasurer*
- Amy Van Belle* *Secretary*
- Jake Groeneweg* *Director*
- Linda Howard* *Director*
- Lori Kowalchuk* *Director*
- Fran Vanderpol* *Director*
- Monique Weir* *Director*

Please pray for these volunteers as they give their time to serve Abbotsford Christian School.

International Parent Orientation Meeting

October 5, 7:30 pm - Secondary campus library

This is a great opportunity for international parents to meet principals from all of our campuses, learn more about Abbotsford Christian School, meet other families, and ask questions. A translator will be attending this meeting. If you have any questions, contact:

Amber Lestage - International Student Coordinator,
604.755.1891 ext 3021 or
alestage@abbotsfordchristian.com

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

All ACS students have accident insurance to travel to and from school, during and after school, and for all sporting events and field trips; however, you may want to consider additional accident insurance if you don't already have access to a group plan. Additional insurance will provide your child with coverage 24 hours a day, each day of the week for injuries sustained by any accident.

It includes accidental dental and health expenses, fractures and principle sum indemnity, rehabilitation benefits, etc. A brochure is available at your school office. If you would like to purchase this insurance, write your child(ren's) name(s) on a separate piece of paper and enclose it with \$5.50 per student in an envelope addressed to the Attention of **Mari-lyn Vriend**. Please submit it to one of the school offices by September 15, 2010.



FOR SALE: Blessings Trumpet. Student standard B127. Perfect for school band. Lovingly used. All hardware and oils included. Inspected at Kings Music (where originally purchased) and found sound. \$300. Phone **Janine @ 604-852-1263**.

GENERAL ACS NEWS CONT'D

NEW ELECTRONIC MESSENGER FOR PARENTS

Starting January 2011, we will be changing the default way that you receive the *MESSENGER*. Currently all Messengers are sent via the postal service, kid mail, or with an option of receiving it electronically. In keeping with a strategic initiative in our strategic plan, we are looking to change this in January. All parents will then be receiving the *MESSENGER* electronically, with the exception of those that communicate that they would like to continue receiving them as hard copy. If you truly desire to read them as a hard copy and you prefer not to print it out at home – please call Nilah Lewis in the Admin Office (nlewis@abbotsfordchristian.com) and she will put your name on the “Hard Copy” only list. What this means is that, starting in January, we will be emailing a PDF attachment to every parent. We are hoping that over time, you will see more and more of our communications become electronic. Not only will it become a cost savings, it is also environmentally friendly, and ultimately, we hope it opens new doors from a communication stand-point as we seek to be more engaged with our community. We're hoping that this change will be received positively in our community.

Thanks - The Leadership Team

***please note that these changes do not apply to our Honorary Members unless otherwise specified.**

Volunteers needed to assist with getting the *MESSENGER* ready for mailing. If you like to socialize with other parents / grandparents for an hour or two, six mornings per school year, this may be the volunteer choice for you! (We even provide treats!)

No experience necessary, just willing hands! For more info, please contact **Nilah** at the Admin office:
604.755.1891 ext 4001



Looking to Car Pool:

I have a son who will be attending the secondary school in September & am looking to car pool with someone. We live in Langley City, but would be willing to car pool with anyone living in the city, township (Aldergrove) & west Abbotsford.

Please contact me at kmlisaak@gmail.com or phone *Lisette* 604-534-7113



GRANT TUITION 2010/2011

	CHILD 1	CHILD 1 & KIND	FAMILY * 2 CHILD	FAMILY ** 3 CHILD INCL KIND	4 CHILD + FAMILY INCL KIND
ELEMENTARY	3948/329	5676/473	6744/562	7056/588	7272/606
MIDDLE	4344/362	6096/508	6948/579	7380/615	7584/632
SECONDARY	5520/460	7164/597	8004/667	8328/694	8544/712
REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 50.00 PP				****12 monthly payments

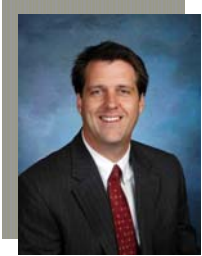
Kindergarten \$1764.00 - 147/12

*if both children are in kindergarten family pays 2x kindergarten rate

**if 2 of 3 children are in kindergarten family pays 2 child rate

EXECUTIVE NEWS

From the Executive Director



The Tipping Point

The summer is fading away and a new school year is dawning. The time is here for families to gear up for another year and as we do this – I am reminded of the incredible financial sacrifice that every family makes to send their children to ACS. Its times like this that we reflect on the reasons for why we believe in Christian Education and why we trust ACS with our children (and our money). Be sure to read the “Why We Do What We Do” articles in each of the messengers to find out slices of this.

With a little more time to read over the summer, I read a book entitled “The Tipping Point” by Malcolm Gladwell. It is a book largely devoted to the marketing of products and examining why things get “big” or why epidemics happen. An interesting read and I recommend it. The central theme in the book was focused on investigating when products or epidemics become renowned or take on epidemic status. Gladwell suggest that there are always tipping points to these phenomenon’s. The book fascinatingly portrays the research along these lines. As I read the book and was captivated by some of the stories, I wondered about new families at ACS and when the “tipping point” happened for them, and what it was that had them deciding that ACS was the place for their children. Gladwell would argue that it’s often a person (a family friend, a current or former teacher acquaintance, a pastor who knows the school well) that connects families to the school, or maybe it’s a program that people have heard about that attracts them (like music and art or athletics and drama). Perhaps it has to do with a program that is specific to the needs of individual students (like Special Education, or English Language Learning). It can also be external expertise that has painted positive pictures of our school that carry clout; for example the *Fraser Institute* has ranked our secondary school as the top academic high school in Abbotsford this past year (for the second year in a row), and in the top 20 in the province. Gladwell also touches on the context of people’s lives – which I tend to think (and hope) is the main driver for why people choose ACS. In our context, for the most part, we are convinced that God is calling us to a place that our children are engaged in Christian learning, and we entrust our children to the school to educate them along the lines of what the school says (see our Mission Statement on the front of the *Messenger*). I’m curious (especially as a new family, or a relatively new family) what was your “Tipping Point”; what was it that, had you decide that Abbotsford Christian School was the best school for your child or children? I would love to hear your responses (see blog address below).

For those of us who aren’t new to the school, you will recall that we canvassed all school-parents towards the end of last school year to get feedback in the form of a parent survey. The end of the school year marked the end of the surveys and as such we are finalizing the results of the survey and look forward to sharing the results throughout the

course of the school year, and then also communicating our responses to what parents are saying about the school and what types of changes we are implementing to be better at what we do, based on your feedback. We truly appreciate the time that was taken out of your lives to fill out the surveys and are grateful that we now have a better sense about how our parent community feels about the school. We also did this with our staff last year and plan to do this with targeted levels of students this coming year. As you know, the surveys reflected our strategic plan and, therefore, they have been invaluable in providing feedback towards whether or not we are accomplishing our initiatives in the plan. We are also setting out to communicate with you regularly on how we are doing in regards to our strategic plan, and you will see regular updates in the *Messenger* along these lines.

Finally, in keeping with an initiative in our strategic plan, we are seeking to become more electronic in our communication. In January, we plan to switch the *Messenger* to an electronic format for all parents (our Honorary Members will continue to receive a hard copy). We realize that this is a major shift for many of us, and we want to be sensitive to this change so we will also parallel the *Messenger* in hard copy to all parents who desire to continue to read the *Messenger* in hard copy format. **Parents need to indicate that they would like a hard copy – otherwise we will assume that they prefer it electronically.** We are confident that we have updated email addresses on file for all of our parents and look forward to using this new method of communication. We also look forward to the interactivity that electronic communication could afford (notice that this article is also a blog) and could open up new opportunity for people to correspond to articles written through blogs and wikis online. Many people have commented that not only would they like to receive the *Messenger* (and other school communication) electronically, but they would love a seamless opportunity to respond to articles written in somewhat of a public forum.

Please feel free to comment on any of these issues or share anything else on the blog entitled “Solid Work @MyACS”. I will explain the name of the blog in a different blog post.

Blog Address:

<http://jsiebenga.blogspot.com/2010/04/21st-century-learning.html>

Blog Name: Solid Work @MyACS

Just think about how much easier the process will be when you can simply click on the link ☺

Julius Siebenga -Executive Director

ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL INFORMATION

First Day of School

We are all looking forward to an exciting start to a new school year. Class lists and school maps will be posted on the entrance doors at **5:00 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 3rd**. They will still be there on Tuesday morning when school begins.

When students arrive on Tuesday, teachers will be outside the buildings and in the hallways, ready to assist anyone in finding their way. Parents are welcome to accompany their children to their classrooms. The first day is a full day.

Tym Berger, Principal – Middle School
Roy van Eerden, Principal – Elementary School

Which Classroom Will be Mine?

As the first day of school approaches, students wonder if they will be in their friend's class and who their teacher will be.

At the end of the year, teachers of each grade level meet to make a careful, initial division of classes. The teachers look for combinations of students who work well together, considering the best academic, social and emotional needs of each child.

The first drafts of the class lists are then shared with teachers who have taught the students over the last number of years and the principal. This second level of discussion often produces some changes.

When the teachers return in late August, the lists are carefully reviewed once again. When everyone is satisfied that the wisest possible decisions have been made, the lists are finalized and posted. **This year they will be posted at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 3rd.**

In cases when parents or students are disappointed, it will help to know how carefully these decisions have been made. The teachers and principals appreciate the support that parents show us in this area.

Tym Berger, Principal – Middle School
Roy van Eerden, Principal – Elementary School

Preschool and Kindergarten Classes

Preschool and Kindergarten classes will begin approximately one week **after school begins for Grades 1 – 12**. Kindergarten teachers and Preschool teachers will be hosting **"Classroom Visits"** during the week of September 7 – 10.

By now, you should have received a letter indicating which class your child will be in. All parents will be notified by the elementary office regarding the time of their home visit.

Thursday Morning Before School Supervision:

For those students who must be dropped off at the elementary or middle schools before 8:45, please phone the school by **Tuesday, September 7**, so that we have an idea of how many students to expect. When dropping off your child(ren), please escort them to the library and sign them in. Please make sure they have materials with them to spend time on (a book to read, puzzles, school work if applicable, coloring books, etc). Students will be brought/allowed outside at 8:45 so that they can have some play time and meet their friends before the school day begins.

If you would be interested in providing supervision at this time in order to enable staff to take full advantage of this professional development time, please contact the school at **604.755.1891**. A Criminal Record Check will be necessary and the school will cover this cost. Thank you.

Roy van Eerden – Elementary Principal
Tym Berger – Middle Principal

ELEMENTARY BELL SCHEDULE

7:55	Playground Supervision Begins
8:25	Warning Bell
8:30	School Begins
10:45	Recess Begins
10:58	Warning Bell
11:00	Recess Ends
12:25–1:15	Lunch break
12:35	Students may go outside
12:40	Students must be outside
1:10	Warning Bell
1:15	Lunch break ends
2:40	Warning - Clean-up - Premier agenda
2:50	DISMISSAL
3:05	Parking lot/pickup supervision ends

ACES welcomes two new staff members: *Margaret Cameron* will be teaching ELL to students for whom English is not their first language, and Intermediate French. *Erika Enns* will be a Preschool Assistant on M/W/F afternoon.

Reminder - Elementary & Middle are Both Nut Aware Schools



Abbotsford Christian Elementary & Middle Schools are both **Nut aware** schools. We will have at least one student with a serious nut allergy in both schools and for that student's safety all nut products must be kept at home. Please remember this as you do your back-to-school shopping. Detailed information concerning options for lunches has been sent home in report cards and will be sent home again at the beginning of the school year. Thank you.

Attention Parents at the Elementary Campus!!!

Is the first day of school filled with as many mixed emotions for you as a parent as they are for your kids?

- Wondering what to do after you drop your kids off at their new classroom?
- Come and meet other parents who are feeling the same way
- We invite you to stay and grab a cup of coffee or tea with the PAC

Connect with new friends & reconnect with those you already know!

Look for us by the front entrance to the school. See you there!

MIDDLE SCHOOL BELL SCHEDULE

<u>(Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri)</u>		<u>(Late Start Thursdays)</u>	
8:20	Warning bell	8:55	Warning bell
8:25	School begins	9:00	School begins
8:25 - 8:35	Anchor Time	9:00 - 9:10	Anchor Time
8:35 - 10:20	Classes	9:10 - 10:55	Classes
10:20 - 10:40	Break	10:55 - 11:15	Break
10:40 - 12:25	Classes	11:15 - 12:25	Classes
12:25 - 1:05	Lunch Break	12:25 - 1:05	Lunch Break
1:05 - 2:50	Classes	1:05 - 2:50	Classes
2:50	Dismissal	2:50	Dismissal

Cont'd on pg 8

GENERAL ACS NEWS CONT'D

29TH ACS Auction & Garage Sale

Join us on Saturday, **October 16th** for the **Abbotsford Christian School Annual Auction and Garage Sale** at Abbotsford Exhibition Park. Planning has been underway since the spring and we are looking forward to another great day of fun for all ages.

This year, we welcome Karen Thiessen and Steve Atsma on the planning committee, taking on the roles of Kitchen Coordinator and Canvasser Coordinator respectively. We are looking forward to new ideas to go along with long time favorites of the auction, such as the general auction, Kids Korner, the Livestock Auction and the Charity Auction. This year's Charity Auction item is a beautiful stone water feature, perfect for the garden, patio or deck.

The past year brought some ACS - connected people with their home-based businesses to the table sales part of the auction. This included a Tupperware table, Stampin Up, Pampered Chef and a few others. We would like to expand this area, so if you are interested in bringing your business to the auction, please contact Denise de Jonge for more information.

As always, we rely on our community for donations to auction off. Our team of canvassers do a fantastic job calling many local businesses and individuals. If you are new to the school and would like to donate new items for auction either personally or through your business, please contact the school administration office.

We are excited for another auction and we hope to see you all there!

Take Time to VOLUNTEER We need you!

It takes more than 200 people to make the auction a success. These people include the planning committee members, those that setup or take down, those that run the garage sale, those that work in the kitchen, those that work quietly behind the scenes, the teachers who make breakfast, the auctioneers and spotters and canvassers, and many others. Please consider where you can help and watch for sign up sheets coming home at the end of September. Call

Denise de Jonge at
(604) 855-8875 for more info.



Meet the Teacher Night

All schools will hold "Meet the Teacher" events.

- Elementary September 21
- Middle September 14
- Secondary September 16

Keep these evenings open and watch for more details to be sent out from the school offices.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

PARENT SURVEY RESPONSES

Thanks again to all of you who filled out the parent surveys this past June. We very much appreciate your feedback and your candid responses in the comment area of the survey. The following is a snap-shot on some of the results of the survey:

- We had **165** completed surveys, which we have calculated to be approximately **38%** of our school parents. Although seemingly a low percentage at the outset, most survey “junkies” will tell you that this is well above average for surveys (usually people should be shooting for around 30% or higher).
- The 10th question on the survey asked parents:

“How likely would you be to recommend ACS to a friend or family member who was looking for a school to attend?”

Answers:

Likelihood	Percentage	Response Count
Very Likely	71.8%	130
Somewhat Likely	24.3%	44
Somewhat Unlikely	2.8%	5
Very Unlikely	1.1%	2

We saw this response as a telling stat that was quite encouraging and felt that it indicated that, by and large, parents are very supportive of the education that their children are receiving at ACS.

- Questions 17 and 18 asked parents to assess how our behavioural expectations are at each campus and how we are enforcing them:

“How do you feel about the behavioural expectations that govern student conduct at your oldest child's campus?”

Answers:

Strictness or Leniency	Percentage	Response Count
Far too Strict	1.8%	3
A bit too Strict	9.9%	17
About Right	69.6%	119
A bit too Lenient	15.8%	27
Far too Lenient	2.9%	5

“How effective do you feel ACS has been this year in enforcing a high standard of conduct at your oldest child's campus?”

Answers:

Effectiveness	Percentage	Response Count
Not particularly Effective	8.8%	15
Somewhat Effective	55.6%	95
Very Effective	35.7%	61

We acknowledge that parents are generally happy about the behaviour guidelines and the enforcement of them perhaps leaning towards not being strict enough. These questions are similar to a survey that we administered 5 years ago and the results reflect significant improvement. Thus we initially can proclaim a level of satisfaction of the work that we are doing to provide a safe and God Glorifying environment for all students; however after examining these numbers in various ways (based on campus specific concerns or based on whether the family has experienced specific discipline with their children), we realize that we'd like to see gradual improvement in this area over time. We'd especially like to see parent satisfaction of the effectiveness of enforcement go up. Our strategic plan has initiatives in place to work at this and we will communicate how we are doing in this area.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS CONT'D

- Question 26 asked parents to provide feedback on their perspective of our Late Start Thursday initiative that was started at the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year:

In light of the school's commitment to professional development and process based learning, we implemented a late start Thursday program. Some initial concerns were expressed and we promised to get parent feedback after the school year. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

Answers:

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average
The late start program proved to have a positive impact on our family and the routines that we normally have come to expect.	9.3% 15 resp.	20.5% 33 resp.	19.3% 31 resp.	31.1% 50 resp	19.9% 32 resp.	3.32 / 5
I see the value that the late start Thursday has provided the school.	12.3% 20 resp.	18.4% 30 resp.	23.9% 39 resp.	31.9% 52 resp	13.5% 22 resp.	3.16 / 5
My child has appreciated the late start Thursday.	4.9% 8 resp.	8.6% 14 resp.	19.1% 31 resp.	30.2% 49 resp	37% 60 resp.	3.86 / 5

It's clear that the Late Start Thursday initiative has received mixed reviews from our parents and this question confirmed this. The question that the school is wrestling in regards to this initiative is this: does the school community truly understand the value of the Late Start program for our school, and if not, have we been negligent in providing the information for the community to see and understand what we see as immense value for the school and the kids. With so many of the initiatives in our Strategic Plan having an educational focus that would stretch the current paradigms with our staff, we felt it was vital to provide quality working time for collaborative professional development with our staff – and we believe this decision will pay off for us down the road as a school. Unfortunately, not enough of our community understands this (or believes this), and therefore a major task for us this year is staying in communication with our parent community for why the Late Start program is a positive one for our school; and then showing tangible examples of how this is seen in the improvement of learning at ACS. Call us to task on this.

Although we are planning to continue providing snippets of the parent survey in this format, we are hoping to unveil all of the results at the annual Society Meeting in November – circle it on your calendars.

The Leadership Team

ELEMENTARY NEWS CONTINUED

Much of our school's curriculum is determined by the provincial government. According to the Ministry of Education, we *"have the responsibility to ensure that all learning outcomes in the curriculum are met: However, schools have the flexibility in determining how delivery of the curriculum can best take place."* Last spring, 3B decided to get creative, or flexible, in meeting some of those learning outcomes.

In Grade Three, students need to be able to:

- Compare familiar plants according to similarities and differences in appearance and life cycles.
- Describe ways in which plants are harvested and used throughout the seasons.
- Describe the importance of healthy eating.
- Identify the characteristics of the provinces and territories of Canada.

To delve into all those learning outcomes at once, we decided to plant some vegetables. Just after spring break we worked the soil, and then planted potatoes, spinach, radishes, and peas. We covered our gardens with plastic, so they would stay warm and then we waited. We didn't have to wait long. Our radishes were soon up, followed by the rest of the vegetables. Before long, we had the joy of eating fresh vegetables (*the importance of healthy eating*) and we were able to see the *similarities and differences* between all four types of plants. We were also able to compare our vegetables with the many different types of maple trees that outline our school property. As we studied Canada, we noticed that different kinds of maple trees grow all

over Canada, but potatoes are a huge crop in some of the Maritime Provinces (*characteristics of the provinces and territories*). But the best part was yet to come. Potatoes took much longer to grow than the spinach or radishes, and most of their growing was secretive and underground. On the second last day of school we finished our research by harvesting our potatoes (*ways in which plants are harvested and used throughout the seasons*). Every child had planted their own potato seed, hilled their own potato plant, weeded their own potato plant, and then they had the opportunity to harvest their own potato plant. Many students were amazed at the size of their potatoes and at how many potatoes were hiding underground. As a class, we harvested 388 potatoes, or 37 kg., or approximately 80 lbs. Some students harvested as much as 30 potatoes, including the little baby ones.

The government doesn't tell us that we have to have joy in learning, or find wonder in God's creation, but as a class that was probably our highlight. As a teacher, that was definitely my highlight. The looks on each child's face, when they reached into the ground and pulled out a huge potato, made me appreciate all over again the creativity of our God and my joy in sharing that with students.

Our next garden experiment is to grow wheat. We hope to be able to harvest our wheat, mill it and bake bread with the flour. (That covers a few more learning outcomes prescribed by the government.) We'll let you know in the next Messenger if our wheat experiment was a successful one! *by Judy de Waal*

SECONDARY HIGHLIGHTS

First Day of School

The Secondary staff is eager to welcome students back to school on September 7, 2010. God has many exciting things in store for Abbotsford Christian this year and we are eager to see what He has planned for us at the high school.

Student groups will be posted at the school on **Sept 3**. On the 7th (at 8:15am), students should proceed directly to the room in which their group will meet. There, the group teacher will work with the students on the various activities associated with the start of the school year. These include the assignment of lockers, handing out student schedules, reviewing the student handbook and answering the questions students typically have at the start of a new year. Building a safe, harmonious school community is a central focus and meeting together with other students in their groups will help to facilitate this.

Students will be attending chapel on the opening day. We will dedicate this school year to our Lord as well as welcome students back to school, introduce new teachers, worship the Lord in song and set the stage for a great year. Parents are invited to this and all other chapels!

All parents are also strongly encouraged to review the policies and procedures that are laid out in our Student Handbook and Course Descriptions Booklet, to ensure that there is a clear understanding of school routines, procedures, rules and regulations. Both of these documents can be found on the secondary portion of our website. All students will be expected to know and understand these as we seek to partner with parents in the education of their children.

School Supplies

Secondary students are responsible for their own school supplies. A supply list is available at our office. It was also included in the June report cards for returning students.

School Calendar

A yearly calendar can be found on our website or in the front office. It was also included with the June report cards for returning students.

School Hours

Students: Mon-Wed, and Fri: 8:15am - 2:50pm
Thursdays 9:00am - 2:50pm*

Front Office: Mon – Fri: 8:00am – 4:00pm

There is a study hall available in the library for students that need to come to school early on "Late Start Thursday".

Bell Schedule

All students will be given a copy of the weekly schedule, a Thursday schedule and a Chapel schedule, however – the following is a bell schedule for the year:

Mon-Wed	Thurs (BABs)	Fri Chapel/Groups
8:12 – Warning Bell	9:00 – Warning Bell	8:12 – Warning Bell
8:15 – 1 st Block	9:05 – 1 st Block**	8:15 – Groups (att)
9:42 – Break	11:35 – Lunch	8:20 – Chapel/Groups
9:56 – 2 nd Block	12:20 – 2 nd Block**	9:05 – 1 st Block
11:18 – Lunch	2:50 – Day Ends	10:17 - Break
11:58 – 3 rd Block		10:27 – 2 nd Block
1:20 – Break		11:39 - Lunch
1:28 – 4 th Block		12:18 – 3 rd Block
2:50 – Day ends		1:30 - Break
		1:38 – 4 th Block
		2:50 – Day Ends

*Tues/Wed - Band before school

** approx 10 minute break will happen on a per class basis *without* a bell

School Pictures

Secondary student pictures occur very early in the school year. (**September 10th**) We do this so we can issue student ID cards ASAP. On the first day of school, please be sure to check the picture order form that comes home with your child.

Meet the Teacher Night

See you at Meet the Teacher Night on **Thursday, September 16 at 7:00 pm**.

Bursary Scholarships for 2009/10

We would like to thank the following donors for their generosity to the graduating class:

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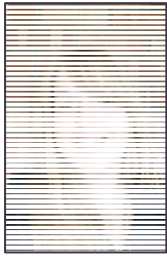
CONGRATULATIONS to students that received a Dogwood District Authority Award of \$1000 for their area of interest. They are:

Arron Griffioen - Fine Arts
Nikita Griffioen - Fine Arts
Brandon Jansen - Mechanics
Krshelle Patterson - Fine Arts
David Seymour - Fine Arts

Molly Teichroeb - Textiles
Nancy Timmermans - Fine Arts
Caitlyn Vaags - Fine Arts
Jeremy Van Woerden - Athletics
Jocelyn Zacharias - French

CONGRATULATIONS to students that received scholarships based on their provincial exams. They are: **Jason Audette, Heidi de Waal, Sharra-Lynn Ganzeveld, Tessa Priebe, David Seymour, Jocelyn Zacharias & Lucas Zak**. In order for the student to receive this \$1,000 scholarship, he/she must earn a "B" Final Mark in English 12, and achieve 86% or higher on each of his/her three best Grade 12 provincial exams. (can include the English 12 provincial exam)

The following was written over the summer by current grade 12 student Sarah-Ann Wijngaarden. She shares her perspective on the value of ACS in her life.



"Why we do what we do" seemed like a loaded question to me, and I originally balked at the prospect of writing such a piece. During the summer, my vacation filled mind wasn't exactly ecstatic at the idea of higher level thinking. I was even sorely tempted to just say the clichéd line of "That's a great question," an admission from me that it truly was a great question, but that I had not the faintest idea of how to answer it, and then leave it at that. However, after interviewing my parents and grandparents, I realized there is something we all need to remember.

My grandparents, my Pake and Beppe, fear the Lord. My Pake is soft-spoken, has a mischievous, but distinctive twinkle in his blue eyes, and my Beppe, somehow, lovingly keeps that special gleaming man in line, in a way only she can. When I asked them why they sent their children to a Christian school, I was not disappointed in their answer. My Pake and Beppe, after some thought, came to the conclusion that it was their "God-given task" to have their children educated in a way that satisfied God's call. They felt an obligation to their belief, and they followed through by putting their children in a school where God was the center. When I asked my own parents, they told me that they wanted me and my brother and sister, to see, to learn, that God is all and in all. They wanted us to be in a place where the belief that God is a creator, the center, was nurtured, not taken away or ignored. Personally, I came to similar conclusions. I want to be in a place that showcases God's glory, in a place where I can learn about the God that sent His one and only son, without hesitation, to save a world of sinners; one of which I am. The God that shows love to His people deserves to have that same love returned, shown by a continual learning about Him.

However, while in a learning environment that does focus on faith-based learning, there is another thing to consider, and that is the tuition. Everyone who goes to ACS knows, undoubtedly, about high tuition costs, and I'm willing to assume that most people aren't thrilled with the prospect of paying for those expenses. I'm quite sure no one jumps up and down in celebration when the bill comes through the mail, or sets up a piñata for any bill party. So is this high tuition going to a worthwhile place, or are fast cars and "freedom" where it should really go? I mean, who doesn't want a 5th bedroom or a 3rd bathroom in their house? When I asked my family again about this, whether it was worthwhile or not to pay this much, when the money could easily be placed elsewhere, and all of us kids in the public school, they replied in a way that makes me proud to say I am family. My grandparents merely said it was a sort of normality; it was their "duty." They didn't have luxuries for themselves, or their family of eight. They certainly didn't have that brand new car all of the time either. And while it is looked upon as a sacrifice, they don't see it that way. My Beppe merely said that "school and church comes first, and we make do with what we have." And they did. Ultimately, my Beppe's most rewarding, most worthwhile part of sending her kids to Christian school was when her daughter, (my auntie) proclaimed, excitedly, that "God is in everything!" My

Why we do What we do

parents answered that it is most definitely worth it as well. It sets us up for life, in the right way, and we are able to worship the God who made us. So without that new bathroom or making the kids share a room, it's true, you've lost out in earthly possessions. But one thing is for sure, you have gained in spiritual growth. And indeed, this means waiting for a new car, waiting perhaps for retirement to go on a vacation, but this also means not waiting to learn about God in a place where He is definitely active.

Now to clear up any confusion, this is not to say that Christian schools are perfect, or the people in them are perfect. There are still problems here that other schools have. We as a group of Christians are certainly not flawless, because to say we are undermines the sacrifice that Christ made for us. We don't proclaim perfection; on the contrary, we confess our obvious imperfections by accepting Christ as our Savior, by accepting that we simply cannot survive on our own. It is truly my hope that everyone who is not a Christian, or anyone who sees Christianity as an excuse to be "holier- than- thou," comes to see that we are all equal in God's eyes. We all start off as hopeless sinners, and end up, well, still sinners. But this time, with the grace and forgiveness of a merciful Savior, and the hope to carry on.

While this is, hopefully, the last year of school at ACS for me, I have come to hope many more things than just a realization of equality for this school, during this year, and for the years to come. I hope that if we decide to get really smart this year, (yes, my apologies to those who "know it all") that we remember that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline." Indeed, I am actually saying, constructive criticism may be something to consider here, and detention, well, due to the fact that I still have friends who may get in trouble once in a while and teachers who tend to lean on the yay side of detention, I'm not going to touch that one. I also hope that the people in our school do not stay in the stage of "infants in Christ", who are given only "milk" but that someday, and here's a scary thought, make it to a teenager in Christ, or perhaps even an adult. And I hope we don't just stay at the milk stage either, but somehow become ready for the meat and potatoes stage. (See 1 Cor. 3:1, 2 if this doesn't make any sense to you at all) And finally, I hope that we, as Christians, can never forget the loving sacrifice that God has made for us, and never forget the Jesus who got frustrated with Thomas, battled with Satan, and is forever loving us.

For my future, I am unsure. I don't know what I want to do or where I'm going to go to college, but with God's help, I will make it. I do know one thing about the future, though, and that is that you can be sure to see me at every school auction, begging my cheese-hating dad to buy a big wheel of Dutch Gouda!

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exploring with a purpose

A publication of the ACS Administration Office

Published six times a year for the interest of parents, students, supporters and friends.
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