



Excellence

As with many of us – I love the Olympics and am excited about what’s in store for us here in Southern BC for the next month. There is something about bringing the world together in a non-partisan way to in essence, play – albeit at the highest of levels, but its competitive play. Surely there are valid concerns and issues that surround the Olympics, that many of us have seen or been affected by. Yes, it is hard to wrap our collective heads around spending so much of our world’s resources into something of this stature when other parts of our world are crumbling. But there is still something special about the Olympics.

Of all of the many facets and components of the Olympics that I am most drawn to, I can’t help but notice the absolute commitment to **excellence** that you see among the athletes. Athletes spend the better part of their lives striving towards perfection. A complex combination of gifted ability, perseverance, meaningful training, attention to detail, emotional fortitude ... the list could go on. These world class athletes are as close to athletic perfection as we will see on this earth. I especially enjoy the stories that television broadcasts will show as they unveil glimpses into the lives of these athletes who have dedicated their lives for just a few moments. In these stories we realize that, most of these people are still just people like you and I, but what separates them is that they have decided that they will put everything into their sport to produce an Olympic medal. The stories show a small part of their journey, their experience, the sacrifices they have made, and the messiness in their lives. Ultimately, the hope of these stories is to bring the viewer into the lives of these athletes to notice that they indeed are fallen humans that have gone through an incredible process to get to where they are today. The result is absolute **excellence**.

At ACS and in our lives, we have some similar attributes to the Olympics: our end goals include absolute **excellence** and there is a journey that we participate in. We realize the sacrifices it takes to achieve this **excellence**, we know full well that often **excellence** requires a whole lot of messiness, **excellence** requires dedication, **excellence** requires perseverance, excellence requires a community of like-minded people who commit to working together, **excellence** requires a visionary commitment. We talk about things like *Process Based Learning* and *Presentations of Learning*. We reflect on *Best Practices in Teaching, Facilitative Learning, Curriculum Integration, and Collaborative Work*. We set out to engage our students in *Relevant* ways. We want to foster our students’ spiritual journeys. We hope to cultivate a *Global Perspective* of God’s world. We have a mindset that seeks to equip students to be *Transformational and Discerning* as they leave the school and we hope that students *Explore with a Purpose*, all of life under God. Ultimately, we do this with an expectation towards **excellence**.

Consider what Paul says to the church in Philippi in the latter part of Philippians:

*“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is **excellent** or praiseworthy – think about such things ...and the God of peace will be with you” (Phil 4:8,9)*

I believe God has called us to **excellence** and, as a community, He will bless us in this calling. This process towards **excellence** is certainly a journey, but we do it together. When I watch the Olympics and participate (in a minor way) in the festivities, I will watch with attention to what is **excellent**.

Enjoy the Olympics.
Julius Siebenga - Principal

Dates to Remember	
Feb 19, 20, 24, 25, 26	“Taming of the Shrew” @ 7:30 p.m. in the Middle School Gymnasium
Mar 5	School Closes for Spring Break
Mar 8—15	Nicaragua Trip
Mar 22	School Re-opens after Spring Break
Apr 1	Interims for Sem 2, Term 1 to students
Apr 2	Good Friday—No School
Apr 5	Easter Monday—No School

Mom's Who Pray

Did you know that once per week, there is a small group of parents (currently all moms) who gather to spend time in prayer for us as a school and for the people who are part of it. They believe, as we all do, that there is power in prayer and we are grateful for their dedication to this place. If you have an interest in this type of ministry, please call the front office and we can direct you in the right direction.



Coming and Going

With the start of a new semester there are always people that we say good bye to and new people that we welcome to our midst.

In mid January we said good-bye to **Elly Spier**. Elly had worked at the school as the Educational Secretary in the Front Office for close to 4 years. Thank you Elly for your service to our school and God's Blessing in your future plans and activities.

In our French department, **Mrs. Erin Pastoor** has begun her work with us as she teaches a French 10 class as well as the FACT 11 class (French and Christian Theology).

Catherine Bentum was hired to work with our ELL (English Language Learners) students and teaches an ELL class every day. And, as mentioned in another place in the Knight Vision, we have a short term program that we have hired someone to lead – her name is **Jeanette Derkatch**.



S.A.L.T. is very excited for the upcoming semester! Our theme this year has been "Breaking Down Walls," in our school community and our all-encompassing society, and we seek to accomplish this through various activities that have both local and global impact. We, as a team, are thrilled to be fulfilling this goal through hosting many larger events this semester, along with smaller events like our Olympic Spirit Day, to celebrate the fact that Canada is "destined to dominate" the Olympic podium; various dress-up days such as Retro Day and Twin Day; and Common Grounds, an afterschool coffee house that the team hosts once every couple of

months. We have been planning several key events since the beginning of the year, such as the Formal Dance, which will occur in the middle of April. We've chosen an "Under the Sea" theme and are looking forward to making this event a rousing success. We are also very excited for our annual 30Hr Famine event occurring in the end of April. All money raised by this event is being donated to Haiti through World Vision, as our contribution to the continuing efforts there. We desire to help our global community and look forward to the opportunity to be a part of something bigger than ourselves, something outside our personal interests.

Another annual tradition that the whole school anticipates is our beloved Air Band, which happens during Celebration Week in the end of May. Students are encouraged to make an Air Band performance; it's an experience they will never forget, and will laugh about for years to come! Along with our traditional events, we have added a new event in the casual dance, which will happen in the middle of June. We hope that it is embraced by the student populace and may become another beloved tradition in the years ahead! We've put a lot of work and care into planning all of these events and more, and ensuring their success. We eagerly embrace the challenges to come as we move into this next semester here at ACS, and encourage both student and parent participation as we build up our community by "Breaking Down Walls."

The SALT team

Senior Biology students fight crime with Science!

On Monday, AP Biology and Biology 12 students donned their lab coats and entered the high-tech world of the crime scene investigator. Students travelled to UFV where they spent the day exploring ways in which our present understanding of molecular biology and gene structure can be applied to criminal investigations. Students were presented with a detailed description of a crime scene and a list of possible suspects. After some explanation and review, students carried out blood type analysis and then used this to narrow the list of suspects. Our instructor, Casey, was quick to point out that this was “evidence” not “proof”. She said that the job of conviction was up to the prosecuting attorney and that they relied on the evidence that the investigators provided.



Next up was fingerprinting. Students learned to recognize “arches” “whorls” and “loops”. Did you know that you have different fingerprints on all of your fingers and that fingerprints are not determined by genetics? Rather, they form during pre-natal development and therefore are not ever the same, even with identical twins! The investigators studied various partial prints collected at the crime scene and compared them to the prints of the suspects. The evidence allowed students to narrow the suspect list. Things were heating up.

It was time to bring out the “big gun” in crime scene investigation...DNA analysis! You’ve seen it on CSI but our students did it at UFV. Students extracted DNA from Kiwi fruit to demonstrate the techniques involved in isolating DNA. Since crime scene evidence seldom has very much DNA, often just several cells worth, the next job is to produce more of it through a process call PCR (polymerase chain reaction) or gene cloning. Students learned the basic principles of this process and then proceeded to take the crime scene DNA and amplify (make copies) of it in. The scientists that perfected this technique won a Nobel prize for their efforts since being able to make lots of DNA from small amounts in collected samples is very important for research.

Students then learned how to analyze and compare the chemical components of DNA samples using a process called “gel electrophoresis”. Its sounds complicated but the idea is to run a small electric current through DNA samples. This causes the samples to break up and move across a gel substance based on the weight of its individual components. Different DNA has different components so it breaks up in different ways. The DNA is stained so that the components can be seen and therefore, they can be compared.



After carrying out the analysis, the evidence was clear. Katrina was the killer! Or was she? Students were reminded that evidence is not necessarily proof. It only allows the police and prosecuting attorneys build their case. Our biology students have studied the structure and function of DNA in class but this workshop allowed them to understand that scientific knowledge has many practical applications, that evidence and proof are not necessarily the same thing and that the way the process of gathering evidence is portrayed on TV is not usually the way it is carried out in “real life”. In many ways, this was quite a reality check for the students. Our thanks to Casey and “Geneskool” for a thoroughly engaging and relevant opportunity for our students. Who knows, maybe some of the next CSI’s will come from Abby Christian?

Mr. Rob Bakker

Professional Development

Three of the high school's department heads joined about 75 teachers from all over North America (and a large contingent from Israel) at San Diego's High Tech High (HTH). Because of its innovative approach to education, this charter school hosts visits to share its methods with other educators. During assessment week, Patrick Naayer, Ed VanWoerden and Trent DeJong, along with Tym Berger (principal of the Middle School) visited HTH and returned to ACS with much to think about.

In the development of projects and learning activities, HTH teachers consider what they call *The Six A's*:

Authenticity—Foundational to HTH's approach to learning is authenticity. Learning activities are not contrived or have meaning only within the classroom, but have meaningful connections to life.

Applied learning—Because learning is not just for the classroom, neither is the work of the classroom contained within its four walls. They believe what the students learn should be applied in practical ways for the benefit of the school community and beyond, in some cases globally.

Active exploration—What impressed me the most about observing classes was the level of engagement I saw in the students. They rarely sat passively, but were engaged in research, seminars, construction and creation. From class to class, the lessons were carefully designed for students to do the work of learning so that they discovered facts, truths and ideas and weren't just told them.

Academic rigor – Some of us were a little skeptical on this point before our visit. Our questions was: What do you lose when students are working on projects? Will the content be covered? Will they learn the necessary skills? The answer to the last question was a resounding yes. Regarding content, there is no doubt that the students learn what is covered very well and are able to make more meaningful connections to other things they've learned, but it is more difficult to cover as much content. We continue to think about this tension that exists between breadth and depth of learning.

Adult connections—While the students experience freedom, they are not left to themselves; adults function as guides and experts. Teachers facilitate learning through the planning of lessons and projects, but experts from outside of the school community are brought in to provide specific support in a variety of fields.

Assessment practices—As at our school, students are assessed against clear standards, but HTH adds the added dimension—the Presentation of Learning. The POL can take many forms, but in each case students are challenged to share their learning with an audience. This may be through formal presentations or displays in the hallway. Regardless of the product, they insist that the projects be of high quality and not end up as dumpster filler when the display is taken down.

The visitors to HTH were impressed and saw much that would be of benefit to our students. We also agreed that we cannot, nor would we want to, become just like HTH. We continue to engage in this conversation for the benefit of the students, and in order to be more faithful in our task as Christian educators.

Trent De Jong, English Department Chair

Nicaragua



We can't believe the Nicaragua Service Trip is less than one month away! Our team has been busy preparing for the trip: sharing their anticipation through chapel, meeting regularly for team building and logistic preparations, and fundraising through a bottle drive and school free-will offerings during chapel. Just last week the team received their vaccinations – one more sign that this trip is becoming a reality really fast!

During the first week of spring break, March 8-15 our 13 member Nicaragua Team will be heading down to Managua and serving two school sites in the surrounding area through the organization Worldwide Christian Schools (www.wwcs.ca). After last year's team came back, our school's student body raised \$10 000 to help the school Vida y Esperanza build more classrooms. On this trip, our team will be working at this school again to finish up that project by doing finishing and painting of three classroom buildings. They will also go to another school site still to be determined by WWCS that is close to Managua to aid in upgrades there.

In anticipation for this trip, the team has been sharing what this opportunity means to them. They are looking forward to learning how to use the gifts that God gave them to serve others and bring hope to those who are in rough situations. They are also excited to be part of a team that is dedicated to making other's lives better by doing practical things like building classrooms where other kids can learn and get to know the Lord.

Even though the date is drawing near, the team is still trying to raise the money necessary to go on this trip. Financial support through donations are always welcome, as well, the team will be running another bottle drive the last Saturday of February – a date to put on your calendars! In addition, the team will be running a plant sale when they come back to raise some further funds for the trip.

The team covets your prayers for safety and a truly life-altering experience for the communities they serve and themselves. To be sent off with this support is essential as each member embarks on this exciting trip!

Pam Van Dop
Nicaragua Team Coordinator

You deserve an evening off from the Olympics!!

Students have been working on *The Taming of the Shrew* since September and would love to have you out to see our work! You can always catch the Olympic highlights on the news, but you will never be able to re-capture the excitement of live theatre.

In true Shakespearean fashion, this production will be strewn with physical comedy, confusion, larger-than-life characters, and the occasional poke of a sword ... or whatever Grumio can muster. You won't want to miss the fun!! The production will run February 19, 20, 24-26 at 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$8 Students and \$10 Adults (\$11 at the door for everyone). Tickets can be purchased at the front office of the high school or by calling the school at (604) 755-1891. The production will take place in the transformed Middle School gymnasium.



A promo video will be linked to the school website very soon, so check it out.

International Students Short Term Program



Ten students and their teacher from our sister schools, Shin Heung and Ki Jun, in Jeongju, South Korea, are studying with us for the month of February. Here is one student's experience:

I'm Ho Young from Korea. My English name is Charlie. I had really good experiences in Canada: hockey game between Abbotsford and Chicago Wolves, trip to Victoria and Vancouver and studying with you guys in beautiful Abbotsford Christian School. Because of you, Canada remained as a good country in my memory. I thank to you for all the help you gave me while staying here. Also, I am very interested about Olympics in Vancouver. I am going to Olympic curling game soon. Maybe it will be my favourite experience in Canada. I've been here one and a half years ago for three months. And Canadians were really kind. Of course, this time, Canadians are good. I love Canada and Abbotsford. I will never forget about this valuable camp. I also hope great relationship between Korea and Canada. And please be kind and teach many things to next Korea students, too.

Thank you!

F.A.C.T. (French and Christian Theology)

As was explained in detail in a recent Messenger, F.A.C.T. is a class that combines grade 11 French and Grade 11 Bible and is primarily a student directed class. The following is a summary of their early activity.

In F.A.C.T. we have been very busy! Here are some of the high-lights from the first two weeks: Students dove into Alan Paton's book "*Cry the Beloved Country*", shared the many biblical parallels evident to them and compared and contrasted the film with the book. They have discovered some of their strengths and weaknesses and communicated them to the class in skit form. We are currently looking at the lives of Nelson Mandela and of Moses and delving into what it means to be a person of stature. It has been an exciting start to a new semester and we are so looking forward to learning and growing together as a class.

Erin Pastoor

Nicaragua Team Bottle Drive

Our next bottle drive is on the morning of Saturday, February 27th. Drop your bottles and cans off at the Secondary Campus and help support our trip to Nicaragua.



Students were given their 1st Semester Report Cards last week. Please note that the GPA was not updated to reflect the end of the semester — if students would like to see an update of their current GPA—come to the front office.



Basketball Recap

The Senior boys played strong throughout their league schedule and finished second in the 'AA' Fraser Valley East Division. Currently they are in the middle of the Fraser Valley play-offs and must play well to secure one of three berths to the BC Provincials. The Senior Girls captured first place at the Big Bear Classic at St. John Brebeuf in early February. They are excited to be hosting the Fraser Valley 'A' Championships Feb. 18-20. The team is seeded number 1 in the Fraser Valley and ranked #2 in the province! They also look forward to a strong showing in the Provincials early next month.

The junior boys and girls have had terrific seasons to date and are in the middle of league playoffs. Both teams have secured berths into the Fraser Valley



Regionals which start on Monday Feb 15. ***Go Knights Go!***

COURSE REGISTRATION EVENING – April 6 OR 7

***For ALL students currently in grades 8 – 11 & their parents**

Our staff will be on hand to share their expertise on the courses they teach - You will hear a lot of important information about making course selections, graduation requirements & the different choices our students have to meet the government standards for receiving their Dogwood diploma. (Grade 12 grad).

Feb 11 – March 5

A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY for ALL Grade 10 Students & their parents:

You'll meet with Mrs. Bakker (academic counselor) to talk about course choices, future plans and possible career directions / requirements. This meeting will help make the upcoming course selection/registration evening much more informative grade 10 students who have a lot more course choices to make. This is the time to ask any questions you might have!

*Book your 20 minute appointment before spring break through Mrs. Bangma @ **604-755-1891 (local 3035)** or email at dbangma@abbotsfordchristian.com as soon as possible.

GRADE 11 STUDENTS:

Grade 11 students (going to grade 12) can meet with Mrs. Bakker to ask questions, clarify details, check course requirements etc... during the school day, anytime after spring break.

