



CONNECTION

October 2016

Mr. James Meinen
Principal



FROM THE BOARD

Here we are two months into the school year and much to look forward to in the near future. We have our annual school society meeting in a few weeks and plans for the school Christmas program are underway. It is amazing how much is going on at Harvest as we seek to 'Give to the Lord the Glory Due His Name'; fulfilling our mission of assisting parents in keeping the vows they made at the baptism of their children. There are many people involved in this task: We have our great teachers, a number of wonderful volunteers in the school and then all those involved on the Board and various committees. It is wonderful to see the LORD at work in our community through all the efforts of His children.

Rachel Sikkema and I had the privilege of sitting in during the morning classes and also speaking with our wonderful Staff. Just as each student is unique in their God given character, gifts, and talents so too with our teachers. So in this report I'm going to get personal! Let's start with grades 1&2; Janelle Vantol has a wonderful way with these little tykes. While she is enthusiastic and expressive at the same time she is calm and patient with those in her charge. The love between student and teacher in this classroom is palpable. Erica deHaan teaching grades 3&4 does a great job. She is soft spoken and yet expressive. She is able to engage these students and keep them in line, all without raising her voice (at least not while we were in the room☺). James Meinen has an energetic group of 5th and 6th graders, boys and girls alike! However, his commanding presence is able to keep things in control and yet still fun. The grade 7&8 class is well served by Anne Hutten. She has created a place where her students feel safe and comfortable to express themselves. We could witness the Sunday sermons brought to the grade 1&2 level. Myths and the truth regarding creation were part of the grade 3&4 class we sat in on. Grades 5&6 have begun discovering what a Christian worldview is and what that looks like in day-to-day practice. The presentations we saw from the grade 7&8 class were amazing as each student stood before the class (and a couple of strange observers). They showed their individual talents and interests in the various presentations, it was great to see.

During our visit we were presented with very detailed lesson plans which showed a great deal of professionalism. The special needs of students were addressed and we know from follow up discussions that this has the attention of our staff. We witnessed time and again during the morning how our Reformed Christian Faith is being woven into the curriculum. (Banana Bread James☺) The atmosphere in the whole school is wonderful and it was a pleasure to see with our own eyes the fruit of everyone's labours. Apparently my space on this page isn't limitless but you get the idea; we are richly blessed by our God with this school. May we indeed give Him the honour and glory due His Name.

As I write this report on behalf of the Board I am reflecting on the fact that this will likely be my last report for the Newsletter. Looking back on the time I have spent on the Board I can see how the LORD has always been with our school. We have had difficult situations we had to work through and times of joy; in all of these we could give praise to our God. I would especially like to thank the school society for the ongoing support the Board receives from you. I can't overstate how important this support is to the members of the Board. I hope and pray that this may continue in the future. I can also say on a personal level that I have been greatly encouraged by past and present members of the Board in my task as chair and I am thankful for their hard work and dedication. Over the years I have heard many of the benefits of Christian education (Jason Heemskerk will be speaking on this at our annual membership meeting). There are studies by Cardus (a think tank dedicated to the renewal of North American social architecture) that show that Christian education not only benefits the individual student but also society as a whole. As families and as a church community we can also witness firsthand the benefits of Home, Church and School in the lives of God's covenant children. However, when we are so busy with 'Life' we sometimes fail to see or seem to forget the blessings we have right before us here at Harvest Canadian Reformed Christian School.

One of the perks of being on the Board and Ed-Com are the classroom visits, made four times each school year. On Tuesday Oct 25

On behalf of the Board, Calvin Kapteyn

School Board

Chairman: Calvin Kapteyn
Vice Chair: James Gunnink
Secretary: CarolinBosscher
Treasurer: Mark Hutten
Maintenance: Andrew Groeneveld

Education Committee

Chair: James Gunnink
Vice Chair: Ken Hutten
Secretary: Rachel Sikkema
Member: Matt Hutten
Member: Irene Baron

Teaching Staff

Gr. 1-2-Mrs. J. Vantol
Gr. 3-4 - Ms. E. deHaan
Gr. 5-6 & Principal - Mr. J. Meinen
Gr. 7-8 - Ms. A. Hutten
Art - Mrs. B. Spanninga

Volunteer Staff

Mrs. J. Antuma (Librarian)
Mrs. R. Sikkema (Admin Assistant to Principal)

Mission Statement:

Our aim is to assist parents in educating covenant children in accordance with God's Word as we confess that in the Three Forms of Unity, to equip and assist them in developing their individual gifts and talents for a joyful life of responsible stewardship to God's glory.

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TREASURER'S REPORT

We are off to a good start this year with our operating budget being maintained by the current income. Thanks to all! At this time we're also working on a new preliminary budget for the next school year, and are receiving much valuable information as comparables across Ontario from the League. It's great to have this organization as a resource. Please continue to remember the school finances in your giving, and thanks again for your continued support.

Mark Hutten

FEE SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 1, 2016

Category 1 (Junior/Student): **\$50.00/month**
Category 2 (Young Adult/Single/Retired): **\$150.00/month**
Category 3 (Regular members): **\$295.00/month**
Category 4 (Parental members): **\$675.00/month**

Postdated cheques are required. We now have the option to do Pre-authorized Debit from your bank account. Please talk to Mark Hutten if you wish to sign up for this.

*Please note: You can write your cheques to either
"Harvest Canadian Reformed Christian School"
OR "The Canadian Reformed School Society of Owen Sound and District"*



FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

We are thankful for God's faithfulness as we reflect on this school year now well on the way. We welcome new member Irene Baron to the committee and would also like to thank Jenn Vandenberg for her time and commitment to the committee.

Thanks to all that could make it to the Open House evening, it was great to see an excellent turnout with plenty of new faces. We

would like to thank the staff for excellent presentations and also to extend a special welcome to Lacey the Saint Bernard who will be joining the school children once per week as therapy dog.

Under current curriculum review is the science program to see if there are any needs from the staff, students or provincial guidelines. We also are currently working on developing a special education

policy to be referred to when needed.

May God continue to bless the children and staff of our school and everyone involved giving them all strength and wisdom for their daily tasks to His honour and glory.

On behalf of the Education Committee,

Matt Hutten

www.harvestschool.ca

We continue to update the website with CALENDAR information and new staff profiles are available ☺.

Take some time to check it out!

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK:



With almost two months of school already behind us, a lot has happened here at Harvest since the writing of my last report. On September 6, Harvest opened its doors to forty eager students and both staff and students have been hard at work since then. From learning about phonics, to French, to homonyms, to harmony, to ecosystems, to exponents, to Genesis, to genetics, to the intertestamentary period, to integers (just to name a few topics), our students have tackled a huge range of material in a short time. And one of the exciting aspects about school is we have a whole host of other topics and parts of God's Creation we still get to explore in the months to come!

To prepare for upcoming units and lessons, the staff continues to be busy infusing our teaching with the reformed perspective. While this does require a lot of work, it is one of the most rewarding aspects of our job. I'll provide a brief case and point. The first unit in the grade 5/6 Language Arts curriculum was entitled "Taking a Stand," and really focused on me and my rights. Here at Harvest, we could take this man-centered approach and turn it on its head. We could explore what God's Word actually says about taking a stand and learn when it is okay to fight against those in authority over you and when it isn't. The unit also allowed us to reflect on how

we communicate with others. So often we complain, grumble, and protest, but when do we actually pause and give thanks?

So the students in grade 5/6 took up their pens and wrote letters to companies to thank them for their products. Letters were sent out, with not a lot of hope of hearing back from the major corporations that would receive our correspondence. I was especially sceptical that a letter sent by Justin to thank Coca-Cola for making good pop would make it past the recycle bin. However, a few short days after the letter was sent out, a handwritten letter and an assortment of Coca-Cola goodies was delivered to Justin's house!

The letter stated how they almost never receive letters in the mail anymore and really appreciated receiving a letter of thanks. Here was an extremely large corporation, taking the time to say thanks for saying thanks! While I don't know what types of letters Coca-Cola receives, I am pretty certain Justin's letter was not the norm. While our society seems to have no problem complaining (and even teaching students to fight for their rights by complaining), we seem to do less well on the thankfulness end.

I think there is a take-away lesson here for all of us. How often do we express our thankfulness to those around us for what they do? While we might be thankful, do we actually state that? Do we model what thankfulness should look like to the next generation in our actions? Christians ought to be the most thankful people as 1 Thess. 5:16-18 states: says: "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." Having the opportunity at Harvest to stress the importance of giving thanks and other biblical truths is one of the wonderful parts of having a school built on the foundation of God's Word.

Sponsoring a Child

This giving mindset was also the motivation for Harvest to begin the process of sponsoring a child. While we have worked hard in the past to raise funds for our field trips and year end events, the Student Council decided that we should not just focus on ourselves, but rather others. Committing to sponsoring a child is a big commitment, but also serves as a reminder how blessed we are to be in a position to help out. The Student Council hopes to have a few specific fundraisers for this cause over the course of this year. More information about who we are sponsoring and other details will come out in a future newsletter.

Volunteers

This giving mindset is also evident at Harvest with all the volunteers who come in to help the school run smoothly. On almost a daily basis a volunteer or two can be seen in the school working one on one with a student, helping with seatwork in a classroom, helping in the office, helping drive for outings and helping with school cleaning. Having the students witness this is a wonderful lesson which tells them that God's people are a people that help others. God's people are a people who give up their time, not for their benefit, but for the benefit of others. And such an example is exactly what undergirds Harvest's foundations. We are school that is here to serve and help the parents of our church in their task of raising Covenantal children. It is my hope and prayer that such wonderful support can continue to be the case as this year unfolds.



Athletics

Well despite our small size, Harvest offers even more sport options than my previous K-12 school of 250 students! Already this year, students participated in three sport outings. All grade 6-8 students took part in the annual soccer tournament in Smithville. Here the team played great, winning three games and losing one. We capped off our soccer season playing our neighbouring school, Timothy, and eked out a 5-4 victory. Six other students also participated in cross-country. The students performed great and are commended for their hard work. Next month will see our grade 7/8 students participate in a volleyball tournament. We will welcome two Ambassador students to our team, as Ottawa is unable to send a team, and this should serve as a great opportunity for fellowship with these students in our sister school.

Interim Report Cards

While parents are generally kept abreast of how the year is going via agendas, and parent teacher communication, interim report cards were recently sent out which provided parents with one more piece of feedback about student progress. These report cards also served as the impetus to set up some parent teacher meetings to discuss further discuss how the first two months of the year have gone. While most parents were not involved in conferences at this point in the year, it should be noted that parents are always more than welcome to set up a meeting with any teacher if they have any concerns they wish to discuss. At day's end, our goal is to have great communication so as better to serve you in our role as a teacher to your child. More formal term report cards will be issued in December.

Visiting Harvest

Finally, feel free to mark on your calendars a few upcoming events that you are more than welcome to attend. On October 31st at 8:30 we will be having our annual Reformation Day Assembly. On November 11, we will be heading to the Chatsworth cenotaph for Remembrance Day. And finally, our Christmas program is slated for December 23.

That's it from the principal desk for now. *James Meinen*