

Weekly Eagle News – Head of Schools

My Favorite Parents:

Lots more to share with you today:

1. Congratulations to our varsity girls' volleyball team for their thrilling five game victory over Royal High (Simi Valley) in the second round of the CIF-SS playoffs. They will play on Wednesday in the quarterfinals at home.
2. Last week we had our accreditation visit from WASC, the regional accrediting association that looks at nearly all schools, public and private, in the western part of the US. Here are some highlights:
 - The visiting committee chair has done over 100 site visits and said, "This school is one of the top two schools I have ever visited."
 - As part of their report, there is a place where they are supposed to list a minimum of four and a maximum of 6 "Schoolwide Strengths." They listed 12.
 - There are 16 standards that receive a rating of "Highly Effective", "Effective", "Somewhat Effective" or "Ineffective." There is a rubric to describe each rating. We received "Highly Effective" in 12 categories and "Effective" in the remaining four.
 - Perhaps the greatest compliment is that they described us as "self-correcting" meaning that we see where we can improve and constantly work to realize those improvements. This was demonstrated in this process because we had identified five areas for improvement as a school and in their final report, they listed four, quoting word-for-word from our list (and eliminating one).
 - The strengths that they pointed out were often in categories that we sometimes take for granted. They were a reminder of the fact that we do so many things well as a school and sometimes can forget that in our desire to continue to be better.
 - This quote in their summary aptly described our school and their impressions, "Redlands Christian School has been in existence for over 100 years. The merger with Arrowhead Christian Academy in 2014 completed their preschool through 12th grade family. The school has continued to proactively pursue academic excellence. Strong leadership, staff, faculty, students, and parents have created an excellent and powerful learning environment that is inclusive and resilient. People and programs are in place to support this innovative learning environment and the school continues to strive to set goals that meet the needs of the entire school community. The goals in the current action plan will support and further strengthen the school's academic accountability, social-emotional health, and overall cohesion."
 - To put this in perspective, as much as I am excited by this report and the kudos, I also love the fact that we have a robust strategic plan that ensures that we are continually moving forward and doing more to help your students flourish.
3. After the Great Shakeout earthquake readiness drill on Thursday, our senior leadership team and emergency team leads conducted a 30-minute extended scenario. In our made-up scenario, we survived an earthquake, three found "bodies" requiring first aid (cut out human figures that were strategically placed on each campus), communication with parents, a "gas leak" and a pressing need for water (from our emergency supply). It was a great exercise to ensure we are ready to keep your children safe.

4. For those at the football game on Friday night, you will know that it ended with an unfortunate series of events that reflected poorly on our school and our Savior. While we are working through the aftermath of that, please know that I see this as a great opportunity to speak into the lives of the young men in the program and challenge those who lead it.
5. The proposed warehouse that I referenced in last week's Weekly Eagle will NOT be on the agenda of the City of Redlands Planning Commission this Tuesday. The applicants have asked for an extension, probably to address some of the concerns that have been raised. It is likely that it will be on the first Planning Commission meeting agenda in November.
6. We have decided to not offer a half-day kindergarten option beginning in the fall of 2024. The program has been very small in recent years, and we are not able to schedule in a manner that best serves students. We had been able to schedule all traditional subjects in the mornings with specials in the afternoon (art, music, PE, STEAM), but new scheduling challenges mean that we need the freedom to be able to schedule specials throughout the day. We have not offered the half day option in Spanish Immersion anyway so this will create greater consistency between programs. While the cost differences are not significant between the two options, if this decision does create financial difficulties for your family, please do not hesitate to apply to our tuition assistance program.

Upcoming Dates:

Fall Parent Society Meeting – Monday, October 30, 2023 – 7 pm LS Gymnasium. This will include an Ice Cream Sundae bar. We are recording our principal presentations and my State of the School address and will make the video available by the end of the week.

Enjoy your week!

Brian