

The Lynden Link

Vol. 10, No. 6

Communication Between School and Home

July 1, 2012

From the Chairman

Jim Bareman:

The Lord's blessing, care, and provision have once again been realized in the school's endeavors throughout the 2011-2012 school year, and we give thanks to him! We are also thankful for faithfulness and diligence on the part of our principal, the teaching staff, and the many volunteers who contribute to making Cornerstone Christian School the excellent school that it is. Thank you all for your part in making this school year a successful one!

On Friday, June 15, the school community, along with many friends and relations, could celebrate our twelfth grade graduation. Congratulations once again to all of the grads! We wish them the Lord's blessing on the course ahead of them, and that they may look back with appreciation on the blessing of a solid Christian educational foundation received at Cornerstone Christian School. It was great to see such a full house, and it seemed that most found it an enjoyable evening. At the close of the graduation ceremonies, the board had the pleasure of being able to publicly express appreciation on behalf of the society to Mrs. Tracy Bosscher, our departing secretary, who is "retiring" after more than 10 years of voluntary service. I'm sure Mrs. Bosscher will find other things to keep her busy! We also took the opportunity to bid farewell to two departing teachers, Mrs. Sara Miedema and Miss Amy Kirkland. From this column, we would as yet like to express our appreciation for the diligence and hard work of Mrs. Ellen Davis, who taught the 5th and 6th grades for more than half of the 2011/12 school year. With the many staff and volunteers involved in the instruction that goes on at the school, one might wonder how some teachers who leave are officially recognized at a public meeting, while others are not. Perhaps there isn't really a good answer to that question, but looking back at the past two years, the teachers that have been recognized in this way were actively teaching at the end of the year, were responsible for a substantial teaching load, and their departure would likely mean a significantly reduced level of interaction with the broader Cornerstone Christian community. In other words, the timing and circumstances were such that it just seemed the natural thing to do.

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As board we continue to stand amazed at the Lord's provision in teachers to fill some of the teaching vacancies resulting from the departures mentioned above. Some time ago already, it was announced that Mr. Tom VanderHorst, a brother to former CCS teacher Mr. Burke VanderHorst, would be taking on the fifth and sixth grade role next year. Two weeks ago, the board was able to confirm the appointment of Mrs. Jennifer Tiemeyer to handle most of the role that Mrs. Miedema had filled. Mrs. Tiemeyer is an experienced teacher, a member of the Lynden URC congregation, and is eagerly looking forward to being a member of the Cornerstone staff next year! Finally, our search for a High School Spanish teacher is actively ongoing, with a number of leads and interested parties to consider. Please pray that the Lord also direct these efforts to a satisfactory conclusion.

We are also thankful for the willingness of many to commit financial resources to make up the proposed budget deficit for the next school year. We have not heard back yet from all of those who were approached to help with this matter, but the board is reasonably confident that we will be able to maintain our fee structure at the current levels if current pledge trends continue.

Looking ahead past the summer to the next school year, it sometimes happens that we get to the start of the year and then, unexpectedly (or at least without formal communication) a student we were expecting to be there is not. As board, we would ask that

you let us know if you have a child who has been attending Cornerstone, but will not be next year. Our goal is to be able to provide a solid Christian educational foundation for all of our covenant youth, so it would also be helpful to understand reasons why such a decision might be made.

Also as relates to next year, please take note of the schedule published elsewhere in this issue of the LINK, and plan your activities accordingly. You will note that we have not pinned down the exact date of the eighth grade grad at this time. In an effort to avoid conflicts for the families involved, we thought it best to determine what neighboring school's schedules are prior to finalizing that date.

May the Lord grant refreshment and a safe and enjoyable time of summer vacation to staff, students, parents, and volunteers!

From the Board

Short Report of the Cornerstone School Board Meeting held on May 8, 2012

OPENING: The chairman J. Bareman opened with words of welcome. He read from Philippians 4, and opened with prayer.

MINUTES: The minutes of April 10 (with principal) were read and approved.

INCOMING MAIL: A report was received from Sr. D. Lodder regarding the Teachers' College.

REPORTS:

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: The board reviewed the Principal's report. Staffing positions not yet filled for the upcoming year were discussed. Advertisements will be placed in the "Contact," the local URC bulletins and in other places.

Interviews for the school secretary position will be scheduled soon.

The school calendar for 2012/2013 was approved, with the addition of Martin Luther King day as a holiday.

CBM REPORT – T. Faber reported on the CBM activities and meetings since our last meeting. The playground is complete and looks great. The summer tasks to be done include remodeling the science room and the computer lab room (which is becoming a classroom).

IT COMMITTEE REPORT – Steve Hofford has accepted a position with the IT committee, replacing Mark Kruijswyk.

8TH GRADE GRADUATION – After discussion the board decides to grant the request of several members that the date for the 8th grade graduation evening be changed. The Principal was thanked for his report and input, and left the meeting.

MINUTES from our last meeting continuation were approved, and minutes from the membership meeting of

April 30 were approved (with a correction to the attendance – there were 34 members present).

The board reviewed the membership meeting of last week. The annual visit with a staff member was reported on.

The Treasurer updated the board on current financial status, and the board discussed the pledge drive to take place soon. A long range planning committee will be appointed, with a first step being to project what student populations will look like in the next 5 to 10 years, and property acquisition also possible.

The board discussed departing recognition for staff members who are leaving after this school year.

M. VanDriel led in prayer, and the chairman closed the meeting.

Short Report of the Cornerstone School Board Meeting held on June 12, 2012

The chairman calls the meeting to order and reads from Ps. 1 and leads in prayer. He welcomes everyone present including the Principal. The minutes of May 8th are approved. The agenda is adopted. The Principal O. Bouwman gives his Principal's Report. School calendar is finalized. B. Lodder reports on the activities of the Ed. Com. T. Faber reports on the CBM and the IT Committee. Staffing for next year is discussed. Next meeting is tentatively set for July 17th. Short report is approved and the Principal is thanked and leaves the meeting. The balance of the minutes of May 8th is approved. There were no matters from the minutes. The agenda is adopted. Finances are dealt with. Pledges for next year are tallied. Long range planning committed activities are discussed. Short report is approved. M. Vreugdenhil closes in prayer.

Membership Meeting

Minutes, Spring School Membership Meeting held on April 30, 2012 Cornerstone Christian School Society

LOCATION: Meeting Room, American Reformed Church, Lynden WA

ATTENDANCE: 32 members of the school society (including all board members) and other interested parents.

OPENING – The chairman J. Bareman opened with words of welcome. We sang together from Psalm 78, stanzas 1 and 2, read from scripture, and led in prayer.

AGENDA - The Agenda was adopted as presented.

BUDGET PROPOSAL –

The treasurer M. VanDriel presented the year to date expenditures through April 30. With 75% of the school

year complete, most categories were tracking very near to the budgeted numbers.

The treasurer also presented the board's 2012/2013 Budget Proposal.

- A member asked if we were collecting enough from the evening activities in the gym; it was felt this was being done.

- A member asked what the overall level of salary increase was; the treasurer indicated that overall it was about 2.5% on average.

- Question related to CD – a brother suggested that the balance of the CD at \$50,000 was more than required, and that part of that could be used to offset any shortfall in the pledge drive. This was duly noted.

It was noted that with 32 members having signed the attendance sheet, a quorum had been constituted.

The chairman made a motion that the budget be approved as presented; seconded M. VanDriel. Motion carries (vote by show of hands).

QUESTION PERIOD

There were no specific questions, other than words of appreciation for the work the board has been doing.

UPDATE ON STAFF CURRICULUM WORK

At this point, Mr. D. Kleyn, Curriculum Coordinator, gave an enjoyable presentation on the development of curriculum at the school, and specifically about the use of "UBD" or "Understanding by Design" as a framework to help teachers develop lesson plans that begin with the end in mind.

CLOSING – We sang stanzas 3 and 4 of Psalm 78, M. VanDriel led in prayer, and the meeting was closed.

From the CBM

Tim Faber:

As we come to the end of another school year, we can reflect on the wonderful blessings that we could receive through another successful year! Thanks to all who helped throughout the year with upkeep and maintenance of our school facility.

Also a big thank you to all who helped to complete the playground! This turned out to be a bigger task than we anticipated, but with determination and a lot of help we managed to complete the task! Thanks all! The CBM received a very nice thank you card signed by most if not all of the elementary students. Thank you for this card, and... You're Welcome! Glad to see that you are enjoying the new playground!

I would also at this time like to pass on another word of appreciation, this to Trivan Truck Bodies. We received a donation of an unused truck body that we will be using as a storage container for the lawnmower and yard

equipment. This container we have located behind the fence just south of the pump house and water tank. Thank you very much for this excellent structure. Also thank you to Mr. Bouwman for allowing us to use a corner of your barn for storing the lawnmower over the last several years! Much appreciated.

Over the next couple of months the CBM will be gearing up to work on a few projects around the school. We will transform the computer lab into a language arts classroom and re-use / install most of the counters in what is now the band room, to facilitate Mr. Marissen in teaching chemistry next year. We also hope to re-surface the concrete hallway floors, as well as clean all of the carpets throughout the building.

Hope you all have a wonderful summer!

From the Ed Com

Ryan van Driel:

I'm pleased to provide you with an update on the recent activities of the Education Committee. We six of us (Corrie Klos, Hannah Buitenbos, John Doornbos, Ryan van Driel & Principal Bouwman) continue to meet to advance different projects and initiatives

Senior Projects:

Most recently, the last round of senior projects were presented by senior students. Wow! Once again, the senior students presented their senior projects very capably to the EdComm (and other interested audience members, including friends, employers and family) The senior projects covered a range of topics including (but not limited to) volunteering at an animal shelter, writing a novel, organizing a fundraiser dinner, restoring various tractors, setting up a pro-life resource website plus the ever-favorite home renovation projects! The seniors were challenged to consider how their Christian world views were brought to the fore through their projects. At the end of each presentation, students fielded questions and comments from the audience, and EdComm members were given a chance to provide feedback to each of the students about their projects. Well done, students! We already look forward to next year's presentations. May all your time & effort be for the glory of our God who generously gives us the necessary passion & skills to undertake these projects.

New Laptops in the School Lab

New laptops are being purchased to replace the aging desktop computers in the computer lab. The use of iPads in Cornerstone's computer lab (as a replacement for proposed laptops) was considered by the EdComm. As the versatility & price of smart tablets improve, schools generally are gravitating toward using them in place of laptops and desktop computers.

Perhaps we will one day see iPads replace laptops. May the use of this technology be a blessing to our staff & students in the future.

Curriculum:

The curriculum continues to be an area of focus. As observed before, the diversity of talent among our students is wide and this requires a willingness on all of us to refine our teaching practices and curriculum so that all students can achieve optimal results. Related to that, the Saxon Math program was recently reviewed & reported on. A Saxon math review committee (subcommittee of the EdComm) recently submitted a report to the EdComm and School Board about the effectiveness of Saxon Math at Cornerstone. In broad brushstrokes, the committee considered “Are the needs of students being adequately met by the current Saxon math curriculum?” Questionnaires about Saxon Math were sent out to a number of parents, teachers and volunteers. We thank all those of you that took the time to provide such helpful feedback and opinions in response to the questionnaires!

School visits:

Throughout the past few months, members of the EdComm were able to make classroom visits with members of the School Board, to observe the interaction between students and teachers across various grades. It’s a great way to get a feel for what goes on during the course of a typical day at Cornerstone, whether it’s an American History class, art class, PhysEd class, second grade language arts class or just listening to the junior band producing sweet strains of Beethoven. We are thankful that we can observe that real learning is taking place in our classrooms and that our students are engaged & growing.

Looking forward....

As we take a summer break from the hustle & bustle of Cornerstone life, we do well to remind ourselves of just how much we have to be thankful for, and that God continues to provide for our kids, the students, the staff & volunteers and the society of Cornerstone Christian School. Have a great summer!

Principal’s Report

Otto Bouwman:

I’m sure it is accurate to state that everyone is happy to witness the arrival of the end of another school year. Parents, students, and teachers all rejoice that everyone made it safely through another school year, and everyone can celebrate the arrival of a summer recess. As always, we thank God for his faithful care.

Wrapping Up

Since the last issue of the *Lynden Link*, there has been a plethora of activities associated with wrapping up

another school year. Probably the event that received the greatest amount of attention was the junior/senior trip to DC, which went incredibly smoothly. What a blessing in our small school to be able to have the tradition of having junior/senior students go to the east coast for 10 days! What a blessing that all the travels could go smoothly, that everyone could return home safely, and that all participants could learn so much and have such a good time together!

Other trips could also take place, though they were all much closer by. Some students traveled to the Vancouver area, others to Seattle, still others to Stanwood – and again, it’s a joy to be able to report that all went as planned. It’s encouraging to note too the broad level of support for all these trips, including the financial support from the Ladies Aid. Indeed, teachers are the first to acknowledge the many opportunities there are for learning beyond the classroom’s walls. Thank you so much, drivers, chaperones, and everyone else for the continued encouragement for these activities. Thank you too, students, for being enthusiastic participants in these endeavors.

Of course, the real wrap-up events happened the evening of Thursday, June 7, and Friday, June 15. On those two evenings we could celebrate the graduation ceremonies of our 8th grade class as well as our senior class. It was marvelous to have a full house on both of those evenings. Reflecting back, we have much for which to be grateful. On both of those evenings we were able to give genuine praise and thanks to God for bringing us to this point.

Of course at the end of the year it’s not just the graduating classes which are moving on – it’s also all the students in the other grades as well: to all the students in first to seventh grades, and ninth to junior grades, we also extend hearty congratulations. Continue to go on, from year to year, doing your best and seeking to develop your gifts to our Father’s glory.

At the senior graduation, a few scholarships were awarded. First of all, Kelsey Berends was the recipient of a Noon Kiwanis Scholarship, which is \$1000. Those funds are raised by the Lynden Noon Kiwanis organization, and given to the student after his/her first semester of college attendance. Congratulations, Kelsey!

Secondly, there was also a scholarship presented to Melinda Faber. This year the teachers decided to begin a scholarship fund for graduating students who plan to begin their studies to embark on a teaching career. As teachers we are thankful when our graduating students choose this career path. After all, there continues to be a significant need for Reformed teachers. So congratulations, Melinda!

Farewell

On June 15 we also said our farewell to departing staff members. Also as principal I’m very apprecia-

tive of the work and efforts that Mrs. Sara Miedema and “Profesora” Amy have done. You both contributed positively to the school’s culture and helped students advance significantly in learning the material from your subject areas. Thank you heartily for all that you have contributed!

The time has also come for Mrs. Bosscher to leave the school’s front desk – at least, that’s what Mrs. Bosscher has concluded. Our secretary has contributed significantly to the school’s culture; Tracy, we really appreciated your work, your contributions, and your laughter just outside my office door. Thank you heartily, also from here, for all the you have done during the past 10 years. You will be missed.

Looking Ahead

Each year around this time, we include in the *Link* a year schedule for the coming school year. One important way parents demonstrate support for your child’s educational program is to ensure that he/she is able to be in attendance when school is in session. Thank you heartily! If there are special activities planned, please note them as well.

During the summer months, I hope and trust that everyone will enjoy some wonderful time of rest and relaxation. At the same time, can I use also this opportunity to encourage parents to keep encouraging your children to keep interacting with the written word and with the world of numbers in meaningful ways during the summer months? I have family members in schools which assign regular summer homework, and students are to submit, for example, book reviews of a numerous books they read during their vacation. While I’m not about to suggest formal summer homework for everyone, I would like to share what often happens when students return at the beginning of a school year.

Some students return in a new school year after having had very little interaction with reading, `riting, and `rithmetic for almost 10 weeks. It’s astonishing how much a student – especially younger, struggling students – can regress during summer like that. The first six weeks of school might well be needed just to bring this student back up to speed. (It’s largely because of that academic reality that in most places around the world summer vacations are shorter than ours, with more frequent breaks elsewhere in the year. The notion of “year-round” schooling seeks not to necessarily increase the number of hours of classroom instructional time in a given year, but seeks to spread it out so that periods of prolonged “disengagement” can be minimized.)

So here is my request to parents, passed on with the intention of helping your children benefit as much as possible from the educational program they receive at Cornerstone. Please expect, enable, and encourage

your children to keep reading during their summer months. There are many pressures in our society that work against the development of a reading culture, but as parents you have an opportunity to push in that direction. Thank you heartily, (on behalf of your children....)

One last comment yet about school supplies for next year: Once the season for back-to-school sales begins, please make sure you purchase binders, paper, dividers, pens, pencils, for your child if your child is in grades 9 – 12. The school will provide textbooks, but students are expected to bring all their own other materials. In elementary grades, the school does supply math booklets. Seven/eight students are expected to bring all their own other supplies. The school will supply regular school supplies to young elementary students who demonstrate responsible use of materials.

Farewell

Once again, if you have any questions or concerns about any of the above or any other aspects of school life, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

I wish you all a safe and enjoyable summer, and look forward to everyone’s return on Tuesday, August 28.

Grade One Readiness

For numerous years, I sent out a letter like the following one to parents of children coming to first grade. Perhaps it’s helpful to share it also with parents of younger children:

Dear Parents

Perhaps, as a parent of a child of Kindergarten age, you are curious about the normal expectations schools have of first grade students. If so, this letter is meant to share some thoughts in connection with next year. A well-known maxim is to “work with the end in mind.” It is a great idea to think early about where first graders need to be by the time they arrive in school.

As you are aware, attendance in a regular Kindergarten program at school is optional for parents in Washington state.

For two reasons, our level of expectation of readiness skills for entrance to first grade has to be slightly higher than in most schools. In the first place, because of the structure of the multigrade classroom, students coming into Grade 1 should be prepared to work more independently than in most classroom situations.

The second reason for the expectation of quite advanced readiness skills in Grade 1 is that the Open Court program, which we use, advances at quite an astonishing rate. Though typically schools using the

Open Court Language Arts program are very happy with the results, a very big part of this program is parental involvement and reinforcement. We might as well get started early!

In order for your child to make the transition from home to school as smoothly and easily as possible, Cornerstone staff suggest that the following skills would be very desirable for a student to have upon entry into first grade:

Social Skills

- waits turn and does not interrupt when adults or other children are speaking
- responds appropriately to instructions and corrections
- can interact comfortably with other children

General Personal Skills

- is able to follow instructions and complete simple tasks - without being monitored every step of the way
- tidies up own toys, books, pencils, etc.
- can dress/undress oneself without assistance, including being able to zip zippers, button buttons, and tie shoelaces

Fine Motor/Writing Skills

- strings beads, manipulates play dough, folds paper, uses scissors properly and accurately (to cut out pictures and shapes)
- holds a pencil or crayon properly
 - you do your child and teacher a big favor by having clear expectations here – proper finger hold helps develop proper handwriting skills – it is much easier to teach this properly the first time than to have to unlearn and relearn later
- prints own name
- prints numerals correctly
- has been introduced to printing upper and lower case letters properly
- traces designs, shapes, letters, etc.
- colors neatly (using short even strokes rather than circle scribbles)
- draws pictures
- uses glue without making a big mess
- works neatly

Reading Readiness Skills

- has listened to many stories read aloud and can answer who, what, where, when, and why questions related to the stories
- sequences events in order of time
- knows rhyming words, opposites, (long/short, slow/fast, now/later)
- can identify upper and lower case letters
- knows sounds which consonants represent
- knows the five vowels - a, e, i, o, u
- understands left to right progression - read and print from left to right

Math Skills

- counts to 20
- matches numerals to correct number of objects
- knows more than / less than
- knows colors
- uses size concepts (big, small, smaller than, taller than, shortest, widest, etc.)
- identifies shapes - example: squares, triangles, circles
- compares likenesses and differences
- can reproduce patterns (of blocks, beads, shapes, etc.) and continue them

I hope and trust that this list doesn't frighten you. I know that it seems like the list is quite long and all-inclusive, but it is meant to give an indication of what is desired. The intent is to give you an identifiable goal to work towards in your efforts.

Of course we can never ensure success, since there are so many variables, and ultimately, the Lord grants it. Nonetheless, I am convinced that students possessing these skills are genuinely ready for the beginning of September in the coming school year.

Enjoy your task. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Yearbook

Please reminder to order your yearbooks now. The cost of this issue is \$10.00. Orders, including money, are to be forwarded to the principal ASAP.

Reformed Bible College

For the past three summers, late in August, a post-secondary transition retreat has been tremendously successful and highly appreciated by students and parents.

Highly recommended! To learn more about this Faith in Action conference, to be held at the Deroche Retreat, visit www.rbcollege.com for additional information, for registration forms, and for pictures.

School Calendar 12/13

August	28	First Day of School
September	3	<i>Labor Day</i>
October	4	<i>Inservice Day</i>
	5	<i>Fall Break</i>
	8	<i>Columbus Day</i>
November	2	High School First Quarter Reports
	5,6	High School P/T Conferences
	12	<i>Veterans Day</i>
	21	Elementary Report Cards – Term 1
	22-23	<i>Thanksgiving Days</i>
	26,28	Elementary P/T Conferences
December	21	Last Day of School
	24-4	<i>Christmas Break</i>
January	7	Return to school
	21	<i>Martin Luther King Day</i>
	24	High School Second Quarter Reports
	25	<i>Prof. Dev. Day (with Canada)</i>
	28,29	High School P/T Conferences
February	14,15	<i>Mid-Winter break</i>
	18	<i>President's Day</i>
March	1	Science Evening
	8	Elementary Report Cards – Term 2
	11,13	Elementary P/T Conferences
	28	High School Third Quarter Reports
	29	<i>Good Friday</i>
April	1-5	<i>Spring Break</i>
May	3	Public Speaking Contest
	27	<i>Memorial Day</i>
June	????	Eighth Grade Graduation
	14	Last Day of School
	14	Senior Graduation

Italicized days are days on which students are not expected at school.

Directory

Board:

Chairman:	Jim Bareman
Vice-Chairman:	Marvin Vreugdenhil
Building Liaison:	Tim Faber
Secretary/ Treasurer:	Marty VanDriel
Ed Com Liaison:	Bob Lodder

Building/Maintenance Committee

Tim Faber	Jan Kottelenberg
Dave Kruyswijk	Al Sytsma
Marty Vreugdenhil	

Education Committee

Otto Bouwman	Hannah Buitenbos
John Doornbos	Corrie Klos
Bob Lodder	Ryan VanDriel

Finance Committee

Marcia Faber (book-keeper)	
Jan Hensen	Kyle Lodder
Marty VanDriel	Marvin Vreugdenhil

IT Committee

John Bisschop	Tim Faber
Jan Hensen	Mark Kruyswijk
Jack Marissen	

Library Committee

Hannah Buitenbos	Antina Chase
Corrie Klos	Bernice Vreugdenhil

Ladies Aid Committee

Hannah Buitenbos	Lydia Faber
Lisa Pelleboer	Sharon Veldman

Office Staff

Tracy Bosscher	Hannah Buitenbos
Marcia Faber	Kari VanDiest

Teaching Staff

Gr 1/2 morning, Science	Antina Chase
Gr 1/2 History, P.E.	Jenny Tiemeyer
Gr 1/2 Lang Arts, Music, Art	Janet Faber
Grade 3-4:	Laetisia Kleyn
Grade 5-6:	Tom VanderHorst
Grade 7-8:	Darryn Kleyn
Principal:	Otto Bouwman
Grade 9-12:	Wayne Chase
	Jack Marissen
	???? (Spanish)
	Debbie Faber (Art)