



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Nurturing New Parents'
Understanding of
Christian Education**

1

**Balloons, Physics
and Finance**

4

Knitting the Child

5

**Best Practices for Your
Development Program**

6

**International Education
Short-Term Opportunities**

6

Resources in Our Library

7

News and Events

8

Find more articles
and resources on
www.scsbc.ca

Nurturing New Parents' Understanding of Christian Education *by Henry Contant*

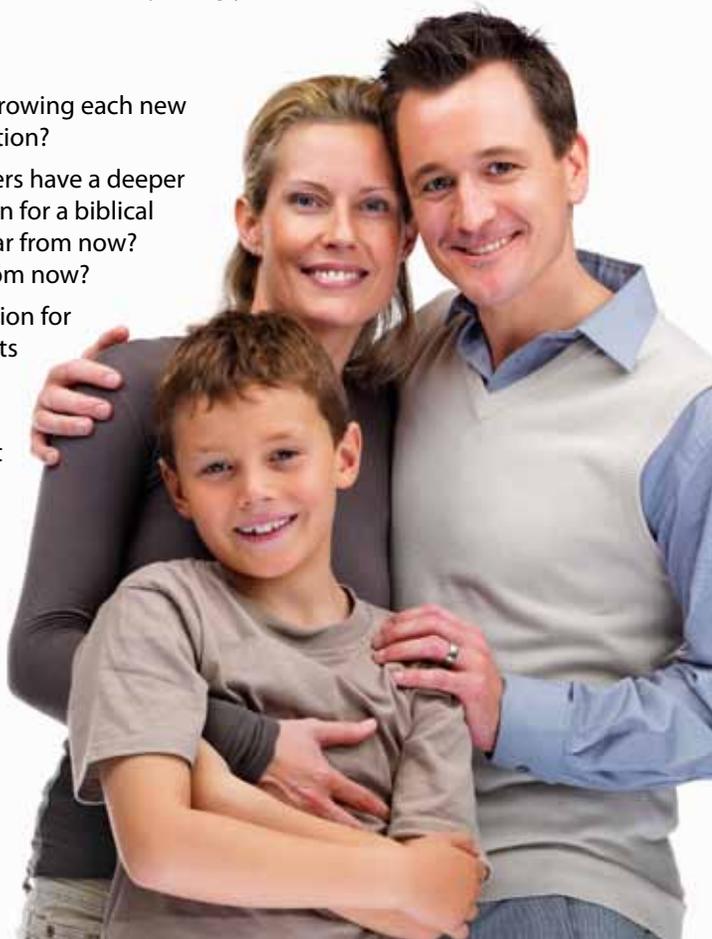
It's exciting. A new school year has started and hundreds of new families have enrolled their children and teenagers in our Christian schools for the first time. This raises an important question. Will our new parents be as committed to Christian education in three to five years as the parents currently serving on our school board and its various committees?

Why is this important? If the past is any indication of the future, these new parents will be your board and committee members in a few years. It's absolutely crucial that the understanding, passion, and conviction about Christian education held by your current school board and staff be embraced by those that are now joining your Christian school community.

Christian school leaders need to ask:

- How intentional is our school in growing each new family's vision for Christian education?
- Will new parents and staff members have a deeper understanding of and appreciation for a biblical vision of Christian education a year from now? Five years from now? Ten years from now?
- Which strategies for growing a vision for Christian education among parents are particularly effective?

Most principals, teachers and board members realize that not every parent enrolls their child for the so-called "right reasons." Not everyone arrives fully embracing your school's mission statement. During my years as principal, I had the joy of seeing our school grow from 400 to over 1200 students. Throughout that period of rapid growth I interviewed hundreds of new parents, asking each one the same question. "Why do you want to send your children to our



continued on page 2



Nurturing New Parents'

continued from page 1



*These new parents
will be your board and
committee members
in a few years.*

Christian school?" I quickly discovered that God uses all kinds of reasons to bring students to our Christian schools.

One father told me that the high school their son previously attended had recently installed condom dispensers in the boys' washrooms. This turned into a defining moment for him and his wife to consider looking for another school. In reality, these parents were running away from a school that endorses the values about sexuality that condom dispensers represent, more perhaps than being drawn to the mission statement of our Christian school.

There were many reasons parents left their previous schooling situation and enrolled in our Christian school. In one case it was because of a failed homeschooling experiment, a "fix my kid" approach. Their daughter was behind in her program of studies and they hoped our Christian school could get her caught up to, or preferably ahead of the class average. In another situation, it was because our school's high Fraser Institute score left parents with the impression our school had a strong academic record, which seemed to appeal more than the strong, well-grounded biblical worldview that was shaping our school's curriculum.

For other families, it was the hope that our teachers would care more, and that discipline issues would be less severe than at other schools. These parents were looking for a school with less

drugs, less sex, less violence, and less bullying. Still other families were drawn to our Christian school because of our reputation of having a stronger music, fine arts, technical education and athletic programs.

If SCSBC did a quick survey of reasons why parents enrolled their children in your school, I suspect the reasons would include:

- the **personal recommendation** of an existing family in your school, (the most common reason given)
- the convenience of being the **closest school** to their home
- a **pastor's recommendation**, with strong support for Christian education from a particular church
- the **reputation of the special needs program** offered
- the **availability of a preschool** curriculum
- the **provision of busing or carpooling**
- the **affordability** of tuition fees

The challenge for all principals, teachers, coaches, counselors, support staff and board members is to meet the parents God brings to our Christian schools where they are at, and move them towards a deeper understanding of Christian education. We all must play a significant role in sharing and developing our parents' understanding of Christian education.

Understanding of Christian Education

In their marketing materials, some Christian schools like to proclaim their success in meeting public school standards of excellence, high test scores, scholastic awards, and athletic championships. In the desire to measure up to the best schools in their communities, Christian schools unwittingly fall into the pit of competition. I believe the more a Christian school simply compares itself to a public school, the more it shows how similar it is, rather than how distinct it is.

How can schools grow a parent's understanding of Christian education? Here are some suggestions that have been proven to be extremely effective:

1. Have different teachers explain how they teach a particular lesson, unit, or topic from a Christian perspective, so that parents understand in concrete terms how a curriculum infused with a Christian worldview is more than they ever envisioned Christian education to be. Imagine your teachers unpacking these kinds of questions: *

- What if you planned a history unit around justice, mercy, and humility?
- What if a math lesson helped students to think about giving?
- What if students could learn love and self-control through writing?
- What if Bible stories encouraged curiosity and engagement?
- What if science inspired discussion of faith and values?
- What if studying advertising helped students think about contentment?
- What if design and technology were about serving communities?
- What if physical education helped students address their fears?
- What if teaching percentages made students aware of injustice?
- What if review classes taught students to share each other's burdens?
- What if baking helped elementary students honour the elderly?
- What if a library collection inspired serious debate about social issues?
- What if geography looked at the spiritual dimension of people and places?

2. Design your new parent orientation sessions to be less focused on school policies, procedures and history and more on how the school teaches its curriculum from a biblical perspective.

3. Hold formal presentations of student learning for parents, encouraging students to explain what they've learned, and how they have been taught to think biblically about a particular topic.

4. Use concerts, performances, AGM's, parent forums, coffee with the principal sessions, and parent orientation meetings as opportunities to explain your approach to Christian education.

5. Link up new families with long-time parents committed to Christian education in a more intentional mentoring relationship.

6. Ensure that you have PR materials explaining a Christian worldview written in languages other than English. (*See different translations of the SCSBC publication "For the Love of Your Child"*)

7. Present your annual school budget as an expression of your school's implementation of its mission statement.

8. Tell stories of how God is impacting the lives of your students and alumni through blogs, podcasts, newsletters, DVDs, and your website.

Take up the challenge to increase your parents' vision and understanding of Christian education this year. May your message inspire, challenge, and motivate a new generation of parents to be as committed to Christian education as its founders were. The future of your school depends on it!

Henry Contant (contant@twu.ca)
is the SCSBC Executive Director

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2012

Planning Strategically

Watch the SCSBC website for more details about the SCSBC 13th annual leadership conference for board and committee members. Meanwhile, save the date on your calendar. You will not want to miss this opportunity to come together with other SCSBC members as we inspire and encourage each other to plan strategically as we move forward in Christian education.



Saturday, November 3, 2012

* These examples are taken from www.whatiflearning.com, a website intentionally built around concrete examples of teachers connecting Christian faith with their teaching.

Balloons, Physics and Finance

by Tim Williams

I have two teenagers and they are great kids. It has, however, become clear at times that the slow development of the frontal cortex in the teenage brain means that the concept of “cause and effect” or “what goes up must come down,” is not at the front of their minds. As elementary school kids, we learn the concept of cause and effect by pushing a balloon on one side and watching the other side pop out. In high school my kids did physics and learned Newton’s laws of thermodynamics; the third law states that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. So why is it that my teenagers sometimes act like they have had a frontal lobotomy? Why is it that I also acted like this as a teenager?

My teenage daughter recently broke her jaw in a dune buggy accident when she didn’t put on her seat belt. She was thrown out of the vehicle and then it rolled on top of her. She was lucky not to be a quadriplegic. My son’s best friend experimented with the drug ecstasy at a party a few months back. Unfortunately the ecstasy was laced with some other chemicals and he died. He was a straight A student from a great family.

Experience is a powerful teacher.

In my role as Director of Finance, I have had the great honour of being able to go into a number of schools to do financial reviews. The sum total of all of those schools’ experience can provide both knowledge and wisdom to other schools in SCSBC. I thought I’d share some lessons I’ve learned. In many ways, the lessons are those of the balloon and physics applied to finances.

- If your enrollment goes up and you don’t hire more teachers, then you may make a surplus, but your teachers may burn out.

- If your enrollment goes down and you don’t reduce your teaching and administrative staff levels, then you will lose money, and lose the trust of your society members and bankers.
- If the government grant pays 50% of the cost of educating kids and you don’t charge parents fees equivalent to the government grant, then you will need to suck the money from somewhere – lower teachers wages, higher debt, inability to replace buildings and equipment when they wear out, or a very generous donor.
- If you fail to account for depreciation in your financial statements, then you won’t have the money set aside to replace assets when they wear out.
- If you use a cash basis of accounting, rather than an accrual accounting method, your board may have a shock at the end of the year when vacation pay still needs to be paid to teachers.
- If you don’t do a projection of cash inflows and cash outflows, then your banker may “flow” you out the door.
- If you don’t set money aside for a rainy day (and you live in BC) then you better know where your umbrella is.
- God is sovereign but man is responsible. The Lord will provide and we are His stewards.

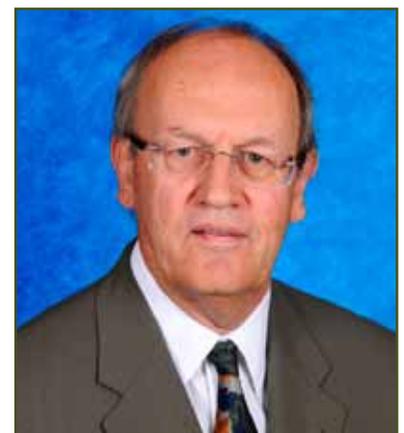
It has been a privilege to work alongside my mentor and friend John Vegt this year. I look forward to serving SCSBC and your school in the days ahead.

*Tim Williams (tim.williams@scsbc.net)
is the SCSBC Director of Finance*



In Recognition of John Vegt on His Retirement from SCSBC

The entire SCSBC community extends its heartfelt thank you to retiring SCSBC Director of Finance John Vegt. We are grateful for the five years that John has served our SCSBC schools in this capacity. His leadership in developing an Internal Controls Checklist, a School Budgeting Template and a Financial Health Review process are having a significant impact on the sound fiscal management of our schools. His outstanding work in developing, monitoring and defending the SCSBC Framework for the Issuance of Charitable Tax Receipts for the past few decades has positively impacted every tuition-paying parent within our SCSBC schools and most other faith-based schools in the province and beyond. This remains one of John’s greatest legacies, and will continue to serve our school communities long after he leaves.



Knitting the Child

by Joanne den Boer

Click, click. Click, click. Knit one. Purl one. Cast over yarn.

As a young child, I watched, with fascination, the speedy double-pointed knitting needles of my mother. Taught in Holland, and with a knitting needle tucked securely under each armpit, she could knit one, purl one faster than anyone that I knew – without looking at a pattern book or even at the mitten project in her lap. I don't know how, but my mother seemed to be able to knit and daydream at the same time, never once dropping a stitch.

I particularly enjoyed the warm affection we shared when mom had me try on the half-knitted mitten. Tiny hands negotiated needles everywhere! There were six in all. I had to be oh-so careful not to dislodge the three tiny knitting needles that held in place the gusset of the unfinished thumb.

"Ja, a li'l bit furdur en den I will be done. What vor colour stripe you want next?" she'd ask.

In reverential silence, mom knitted the finger and thumb sections until, finally, she was ready to carefully cast off stitches to complete the mitten. To a child, knitting is pure mystery. The mystery, I now know, is not in the knitting – it is in the daydreaming. To be more precise, the mystery is in the humble prayers that were offered as incense¹ with the appearance of each stripe of my new mitten.

This made me consider Psalm 139:13. *For You created my inmost being; You knit me together, or covered me, in my mother's womb.* There was a time when I was smaller than a peanut. I was hidden from the view of my expectant mother when she knit my first bonnet. And while my mother was knitting for me, the Lord was knitting me. My substance (skeleton) was not hid from the Lord while He was knitting me in secret. When my form was complete, and the figurative stitches cast off, I was born. I was, and am, fearfully and wonderfully made.

But I wonder. Once born, did God stop knitting me? Or did He pass on the knitting needles to my parents? True, God finished knitting my body with all the little details like neurons, synapses, senses, cartilage, and the like. But what about the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development – who knit those? I like to believe these were shaped on the special knitting needles of prayer, love, affection, and tender care of my Christian parents.

Infants and young children need to have strong bonds with their parents. As they grow, they need to learn and experience the safety found in parents' love. Parents help them develop confidence and self-control. There is much more to how parents guide and shape their child's development, of course.²

Which leads me to ponder a BC Ministry of Education's statement regarding young children in pre-kindergarten, that "early childhood education and personalized learning can both be huge factors in our children's success in school and in life."³ Regarding having four-year olds in school, it has this to say. "Before we start down a path of pre-kindergarten, we are concentrating on successfully implementing full day kindergarten and strengthening our StrongStart BC programs."⁴ This is welcome news because parents won't need to cast off four-year-old stitches prematurely.

We do well to remind ourselves that in 2010 the Ministry of Education acknowledged that independent schools may exercise their right to offer choice to parents. Our schools may offer both half day and full day kindergarten for five-year olds. For this we remain thankful.

My mother tells me an anecdote about two aunts who were her master knitting teachers. When they were elderly, they lived in a home for seniors. One tante was proudly knitting a pot holder. The other happily rolled wool into a ball. Unfortunately this was problematic since she had dementia. Tante Woolwinder was also Tante Unraveler for she had unwittingly begun her new ball of wool with the tail of the cast-on yarn that held the first stitch in the pot holder. While one knitted, the other unraveled.

I'm wondering, should the time ever come when the province of British Columbia enfolds four-year-olds into the education system as full-day pre-kindergarten students, is that tantamount to unraveling their development? Should parents be encouraged to hold onto the knitting needles and yarn transferred to them by the Lord, and continue to knit their child at home for just a little longer? Many of our schools partner with parents and share in knitting the child through Christian preschool programs. These programs are wonderfully designed with the child in mind – a few hours per day, and a few days per week.

Knit one. Purl one.

Joanne den Boer (joanne.denboer@twu.ca)
is an SCSBC Director of Learning

1 - Psalm 141:2

2 - Ephesians 6:4, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes

3 - Conference notes from presentation at BC-CASE Conference, April 2012

4 - Ibid

Best Practices for Your Development

What are the key elements of a successful development program? Consider the following, and check to see if these programs are in place in your school.

1 **An annual giving program** that provides a variety of opportunities throughout the year for your donors to respond to your needs. Best practice is to also provide a variety of areas to which donors can direct their gifts. Getting your school on the list of causes that a donor supports is crucial to increasing your annual gift income and is the only way to create the base of support you will need when you undertake a capital campaign. And don't neglect to thank your donors for their support. It is easier to retain donors than to cultivate new ones, although you must continue to do that as well.

2 **A communications program** that reaches all parts of your constituency regularly (3 or 4 times a year) with key messages about your school, its vision and mission, its needs, and how the school is using the gifts it receives. Remember to communicate clearly with your staff as well. Use your website effectively to share information, to provide video clips of your mission in practice, and to engage your constituents.

3 **A development network** which broadens your support base and expands your effectiveness. Is your school connected to the churches which your students' families attend? Do you have lawyers and financial planners that work with your planned giving program? Are you using your contacts in day care programs and preschools to recruit your students?

International Education Short-Term

At this time of the year, schools are receiving many inquiries from overseas and local agents regarding hosting short-term programs during the school year. Requests can be for programs as short as one day or as long as two months. The reason for these requests is that, for some countries, winter break takes place in January and February and parents would like to use this break to give their children an opportunity to experience living and studying in an English-speaking environment.

How do we respond to these requests?

Boards and administrators need to wrestle with the question of whether such programs enhance or take away from the overall program of the school. Although these programs can be financially beneficial to the school, the motivation for hosting such programs should not only be financial but also how well they fit into the overall vision of the school. A key question to ask is, "Are we doing this purely for financial reasons, or are we willing to use this opportunity to increase an awareness and appreciation within our student and parent body of the diversity of perspectives and cultures the Lord has created?"

One main thing to remember when negotiating with agents regarding these programs is that your school needs to be the one developing the format and content of the program. In

other words, hosting schools need to own the program. Agents will come in with many suggestions and requests for a specific format; schools that have well-developed policies and a vision for what their short-term program will look like will be able to give clear answers to agents about the services their school is able to provide.

In addition to short-term programs during the school year, there are also many opportunities to run programs during the summer. Hosting these programs is an opportunity to use the facilities during the summer and also a way to give overseas students an opportunity to study in an English-speaking environment. Summer camps can provide teachers with summer employment and can also be great for professional development as they teach English Language Learners.

I encourage schools to proceed slowly and deliberately when considering short-term programs. Take the time to wrestle with the issues, and prayerfully consider whether or not hosting short-term students fits the overall vision of your school.

If you need more information regarding short-term programs, or an onsite consultation, please get in touch with me.

*Marlene Bylenga (ieprogram@scsbc.ca) is the
SCSBC International Education Coordinator*

Program

by Gerry Ebbers

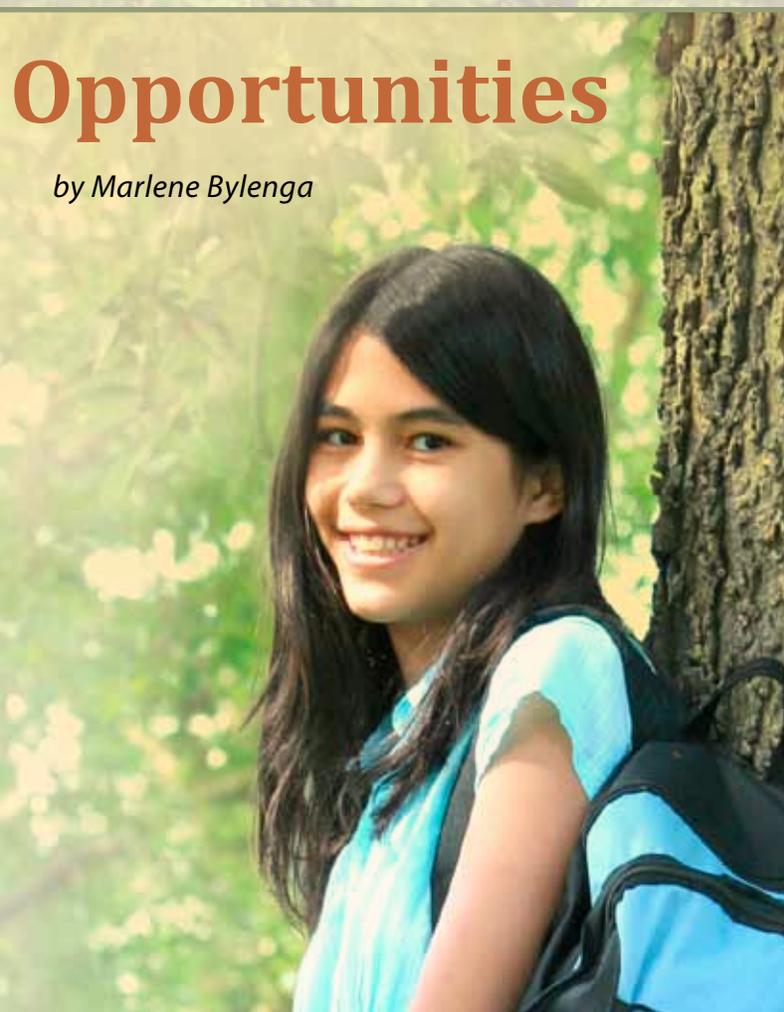
In an annual analysis of your development program checking your success against the goals you set for the year. If you are not setting goals, then you will not be able to evaluate the effectiveness of your activities and programs. That usually leads to a plethora of activities that keep you busy without producing the results you want.

Unlike a periodic development program review using the services of SCSBC to check if your program is complete and effective. Such an analysis can point out gaps in your program and suggest cost-effective ways of improving your connections with your constituents in order to improve your recruitment and fundraising results.

Gerry Ebbers (geraldebbers@shaw.ca) is the SCSBC Consultant for Stewardship and Development

Opportunities

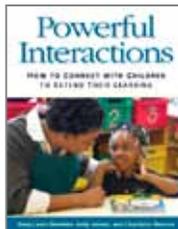
by Marlene Bylenga



New in Our Library!

Check out these resources ...

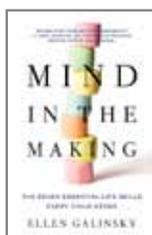
Powerful Interactions *How to connect with children to extend their learning*



by Amy Laura Dombro, Judy Jablon, and Charlotte Stetson

This reflective guide describes what Powerful Interactions are, why they are important and the steps to take to transform everyday interactions into Powerful Interactions. You'll find many specific strategies to help you bring all three Powerful Interaction steps to life with the children in your program.

Mind in the Making *The seven essential life skills every child needs*



by Ellen Galinsky

What does it take for children to achieve their full potential, take on life's challenges, communicate well with others, and remain committed to learning? These aren't skills that children just pick up; they have to be fostered. They are the skills that will prepare children for the pressures of modern life, skills they will draw on now and in the years to come.

The Digital Divide *Arguments for and against Facebook, Google, texting and the Age of Social Networking*



edited and introduced by Mark Bauerlein

There is still much debate about how social media technologies are rewriting our futures. This definitive work on the perils and promise of the social-media revolution cuts through the clamour with the very best writings from each side of the digital divide to help readers make more informed decisions about the place of technology in their lives.

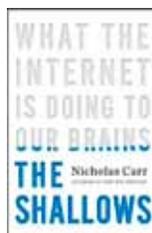
Too Big to Know *Rethinking knowledge now that the facts aren't the facts, experts are everywhere, and the smartest person in the room is the room*



By David Weinberger

This is the greatest time in history to be a knowledge seeker – if you know how. The author shows how networked knowledge increases understanding and how it enables people to make smarter decisions than they could when they had to reply on traditional sources of expertise. A compelling vision of the future of knowledge in a connected world.

The Shallows *What the Internet Is doing to our brains*



by Nicholas Carr

As we enjoy the Net's bounties, are we sacrificing our ability to read and think deeply? This compelling exploration of the Internet's intellectual and cultural consequences describes how human thought has been shaped through the centuries by "tools of the mind." Carr interweaves a fascinating account of recent discoveries in neuroscience. Our brains change in response to our experiences. The technologies we use to find, store, and share information can literally reroute our neural pathways.

Request these books through our SCSBC online resource library at www.scsbc.ca

NEWS AND EVENTS

Rainbow Farewell

Rainbow Christian School in Vanderhoof has made the difficult decision to close their elementary school, due in large part to declining enrollments and growing deficit budgets. Although this was sad for the Christian community that has supported the school for 33 years, the encouraging news is that many RCS families and some RCS teachers will find a home in our other SCSBC school in Vanderhoof, Northside Christian School. Northside is adding kindergarten, a program previously offered by RCS.



Fiftieth Anniversary in Houston

Houston Christian School recently celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a week of special activities, culminating with a 50th Anniversary banquet. Board Chair Keith Jaarsma writes, "What a wonderful weekend of celebration of the HCS 50th anniversary. God's faithfulness over the last 50 years is clearly evident. The weekend events were filled with warmth, fellowship, laughter and above all were Christ centered."

New Principals Serving Our SCSBC Schools

Jeff Covey

At King's Christian School in Salmon Arm, Jeff is moving into the role of principal after serving as assistant principal here for the past three years.

Karl Kruse

Karl is presently on staff at Powell River Christian School, and is taking over as principal from Matt Duggan, whose request to return to part-time teaching at the school has been granted by the PRCS board.

Jason Paul

Richmond Christian School's secondary campus sees Jason, formerly the assistant principal, take over from the previous principal Bob White, who retired at the end of the school year.



Unity Christian School is in the midst of a building expansion. A new elementary classroom wing to the east side of the current building will include preschool and kindergarten rooms, classrooms for Grades 1 to 5, a spare classroom, teacher work area and staff room and an elementary gymnasium. The west side of the current building sees the addition of eight classrooms – the four main floor classrooms will form the middle school wing for Grades 6 to 8, while the four upstairs classrooms will give high school students much needed classroom space. An additional self-contained, 3000-square-foot shop building will be located on the eastern edge of the parking lot and will contain two shop areas with a suspended mezzanine classroom. Move-in is planned for spring 2013!

UPCOMING CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

- 11: Fraser Valley Schools Regional Principals Meeting
- 12: Greater Vancouver Schools Regional Principals Meeting
- 13: Northern Schools Regional Board Training Session
- 14: Northern Schools Regional Principals Meeting
- 17: Okanagan Schools Regional Board Training Session
- 18: Okanagan Schools Regional Principals Meeting
- 27-29: Christian Schools Canada Conference

OCTOBER

- 1: Vancouver Is. Schools Regional Bd. Training Session
- 2: Vancouver Is. Schools Regional Principals Meeting
- 4-5: Christian Teachers Convention

NOVEMBER

- 2: Business Managers Roundtable
- 3: 13th Annual SCSBC Leadership Conference

DECEMBER

- 24: Christmas break begins

JANUARY 2013

- 7: School reopens
- 18: Music Focus Day

FEBRUARY

- 11: BC Family Day
- 21-22: CSI / CEO Roundtable



Society of Christian Schools in BC
7600 Glover Road,
Langley BC V2Y 1Y1
www.scsbc.ca
604.888.6366