



BRANCHES



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The purpose of our parental Christian School is to educate our children to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for a life of responsible stewardship in God's Kingdom.

From the Chairman....

Chris Hoff

Welcome to the April edition of *Branches*. Staff, the Board, committees and many volunteers have been quite busy since the previous *Branches* in March. We do expect to publish another edition of *Branches* in early May that would be exclusively in preparation for the membership meeting planned for May 25, 2016.

Staffing

We have had some changes to the educational assistants over the past month or so. We welcome Stephanie Geertsema who is filling in for Ang VanSponsen while she takes some personal leave. We thank Ang for her continued commitment to student growth over the years. Next month we will also have to say farewell to Paige Vanderhorst as she leaves on maternity in mid-May. We are grateful for applicants to replace her and should be able to share an announcement in the near future. It is our prayer that God will bless Ang and Paige in their individual circumstances.

In our last issue there was a reference to teaching assignments in primary grades. With regards to the intermediate teaching assignments, we expect Miss Nobel and Miss Harink to be our seventh grade teachers, Mr. Scholtens and Mr. Kanis to be responsible for our sixth graders, and Mrs. VanSpronsen and Mrs. VanRhee will share responsibility for our fifth grade class. Fourth graders will be taught by Miss Vanderhoek. There will also be a level of fluidity evident as Miss Harink looks forward to teaching French in the all the grade 6 and 7 classes. We have yet to finalize a few things such as educational assistants, but should have this sorted out in May.

Other General Miscellaneous News

In many respects, this has been a fairly routine Board year - which is in itself unusual. Recent past Board members may be surprised to learn that most meetings end around (or sometimes before!) 10:00 o'clock.

- One of the reasons for this is that our interaction with other schools in the valley is limited to some combined policy work, and prospective changes to our bylaws pursuant to the new Societies Act. Neil Dykstra and Eric Vandergriendt (and well as

Will VanOene and Oliver Hansma) are leading a cooperative effort for all the schools to make sure our constitution and bylaws conform to this new provincial legislation. This includes a number of seminars and, moving forward, meetings with other school society representatives. We can expect to hear more about this as we approach our October 2016 membership meeting.

- By now, most will have heard that the fundraising drive for the expansion of John Calvin was very successful. JCS hopes to begin preliminary work such as sprinklering of the existing building this summer. Construction of the new edition could begin as early as this fall.
- To date, our neighbouring school to the west, William of Orange, has not secured a Principal for next year (to replace the outgoing Kent Dykstra). They anticipate breaking up the duties of principal and teacher into part-time functions.
- When planning for our expansion a few years ago, we noted that the upcoming school year could be a challenge due to the number of large classes. For next year we expect to split Grades 1, 6, and 7. After the next school year the grade 7 class will have graduated, leaving us with (what we expect as this time) just two split classes. Needless to say, having three split classes also has budget implications for this one year period. We are still working through this at this time and expect to finalize our proposed budget at the May Board meeting. The proposed budget will be in the next edition of *Branches*.
- The next edition of *Branches* should also have information regarding a five year plan for CCES that would cover off a number of items that we did not tackle during the recent expansion, such as the HVAC system. We do not have funding for all the anticipated work, so this plan will also include an element of fundraising.
- We welcome Mindert DeBoer to the Education Committee.
- The Reformed Curriculum Development Committee (RCDC) remains active, and plans to complete an updated Health K-7 and Information Technology curriculum over the summer of 2016.

- Our Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College is actively pursuing accreditation from the Ontario government. If successful, this would enable their students to also be accredited, and teach, in British Columbia. At this point, the CCRTC is cautiously optimistic. This is a good matter for prayer and voluntary donations to the CCRTC. We thank our local governor, John Roukema, for his work representing us with the CCRTC.
- Along the same lines, we continue to work with

the other valley schools and the CCRTC regarding a Certificate of Reformed Education, which would be a six course program for practising elementary and secondary teachers presently working in a reformed school.

And finally - we look forward to seeing you at the Mothers Day Event planned for May 7, 2016!
To all of you we wish a blessed Sunday!

From the Principal....

Otto Bouwman

The transition to warm weather has gone very quickly this year. We praise God for his faithfulness as it is evident in his care for us through the seasons. Our God has been faithful, and we thank and praise him for it! As the students could express the other evening at the Spring Program, we have many reasons for gratitude!

Changing Landscapes

We live in a bewildering world - a world where distortions and confusions appear to be rising incredibly quickly. In our neighboring province of Alberta, there has been a deliberate push to require "all schools to identify and implement evidence-based strategies that ensure the safety, belonging and full participation of all members of the school community." While that may initially appear to be fine, in fact it is nothing less than an assault on traditional and Biblical values: all sexual orientations are to be affirmed. Alberta's legislation is by no means unique.

In other provinces across Canada there are numerous efforts to redefine fundamental matters. Manitoba's government released a document called "Safe and Caring Schools," which is intended to be a "support document" for public and funded independent schools as they develop "human diversity" policies. Ontario's premier is a well-known advocate for pushing similar measures. In various states in the United States, there are huge rallies and controversies about the "need" for policies regarding who may use which bathroom. A recent publication from Australia which crossed my desk assured me that also there terms such as "Erase Bullying" were in fact agenda-driven. And even a well-known

Christian education publication recently had an entire issue dedicated to the "need" for Christian schools to accommodate and affirm those who embrace alternative lifestyles.

What we are witnessing is mass confusion regarding identity. Our society's children are being taught to be confused; it seems that everything is to be questioned and all individuals need to discover their own identity. Children need to discover their own truth for themselves and then make sense out of life on their own. How good to know that in reality there are so many identity questions for which the truth is abundantly clear!

For years, our schools and churches have unashamedly identified themselves as "confessional." We have a confessional allegiance; the creeds and confessions, which are written out in our *Book of Praise*, summarize the truth of God's Word and identify as heresy understandings which are not in alignment with Scriptures. These confessions help define our corporate identity. They also help us understand and appreciate how we and our children have received a special identity through the sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; the consequence is that we and our children have also received a high calling!

In a world which is rapidly changing, a world in which there is abundant identity confusion, we may rest assured that our identity is safe in fact with our loving Father. He made us and called us to be his own. He gives us a task; at school that task is to help children understand their identity in Jesus Christ and develop their individual talents to his glory. May each of us -

parents and teachers alike - work diligently and calmly and deliberately with the children that the Lord has put in our care. And continue to be thankful that in British Columbia we may still operate with the active support of our provincial government!

School Matters

There are numerous matters that could receive attention in this column: another round of reports were issued, student-led conferences were held, a spring break was enjoyed, preparations for the spring program could be made and the performance could be enjoyed, and a great deal of regular learning could take place. I continue to be impressed by the

atmosphere in this Christian school - there are so many reasons for gratitude! It is a pleasure to witness daily the professional dedication and love for student growth that is clear from the staff members. I am encouraged when I see students "owning" their work and doing what they can to continue to grow. I'm delighted to see all the effort and growth made by those involved in "Special Education." I'm impressed by the dedication of those on the board and various committees. Please keep up the momentum and dedication, parents, students, staff, and leaders - there are only nine weeks of school left for this year.

Wishing you all God's continued blessing and care.

Regional Special Education Committee Meeting

Otto Bouwman & Kent Dykstra

At least twice per year, representatives from Credo Elementary, Credo High, and William of Orange Christian Schools gather together for a regional Special Education Committee meeting. This group meets together in order to collaborate together and ensure that the needs of all the students in our schools are being met - particularly including those students who have specific learning challenges. In addition, the William of Orange and Credo Elementary delegates approve the budget for the joint Special Needs program delivered at CCES.

Typically, at these meetings each school is given an opportunity to inform all attendees of new developments and opportunities in their Special Education departments. It is helpful to share best practices with each other, since resourcefulness is required in order to best meet the needs of all students. Some challenges could also be shared, including dealing with lengthy wait times (over a year!!) for some forms of testing that are required to arrive at professional assessments of student needs. At this meeting, a proposed "Educational Assessments and Therapy Protocol" was shared and evaluated. The meeting concurred that it is helpful for the schools to have specific protocols in place to ensure not only that all available funding resources are accessed, but also so that everything is done "decently and in good order."

There are numerous categories for different types of learning needs; while some categories result in significant funding for students, other categories do not.

Nonetheless, properly identifying categories of learning needs is deemed helpful - not only so that teachers and assistants can more appropriately address the particular learning needs of each student, but also so that there is greater clarity for the government and assurance that independent schools are optimally addressing the needs of all students in their care. Proper coding also allows independent schools to refute the widely-held notion that independent schools do not enrol students with learning difficulties.

Finally, another topic covered in our meeting included looking at the finances involved in Special Education delivery. Since there is collaboration between the schools in this regard, it is good to review where things are at and where we anticipate things to be in the coming school year. We were thankful to note that there were sufficient funds for the programs in the respective schools to continue. We also note that each year the Special Education programs in our schools receive targeted donations from our respective constituencies; our school treasurers appreciate continued support in that regard!

At the meeting, it was also noted that this was Harry Moes's last regional Special Education meeting. He is owed a great deal of gratitude for his leadership and the advice given to the schools on a variety of situations. We wish him well in the next stage of his journey... and hope that he remains (as he often puts it) "only a phone call away."

Short Reports of Board Meetings

Short Report of the Meeting of the
Board of Directors of Credo Christian Elementary
School
February 8th, 2016

- **Opening and Welcome:** The Chairman, Chris Hoff, opened the meeting by reading from Psalm 1 and prayer. He welcomed all the Directors and Principal Otto Bouwman to the meeting. Oliver Hansma was absent with notice.
- **Agenda Approval:** The agenda for the regular board meeting was approved.
- **Minutes and Short Report:** The Minutes and Short Report of the January 11, 2016 Board meeting were adopted.
- **Incoming/Outgoing Correspondence:** One incoming letter was received from the Fifth International Conference of Reformed Education being held in the Netherlands in September. Two outgoing letters were sent.
- **Principal's Report:** Otto Bouwman presented the Principal's Report for February 2016 and provided updates on staff progress reports, curriculum development days, and the recent FISA conference held in Vancouver. An additional professional development day in April was approved to allow staff more time to work with new provincial government curriculum.
- **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman's report for February 2016 was received for information. Chris Hoff reported on his activities as chairman.

Short Report of the Meeting of the
Board of Directors of Credo Christian Elementary
School
March 14, 2016

- **Opening and Welcome:** The Chairman, Chris Hoff, opened the meeting by reading from Psalm 63 and prayer. He welcomed all the Directors and Principal Otto Bouwman to the meeting. Al Leyenhorst and Bob Huttema were absent with notice.
- **Agenda Approval:** The agenda for the regular board meeting was approved.
- **Minutes and Short Report:** The Minutes and Short Report of the February 8, 2016 Board

- **General Business:** A number of matters were discussed including the recent Combined Boards meeting, program delivery options for 2016/17, and arrangements for upcoming board staff visits. A decision was made to extend an offer of employment to Jenn Harink to fill a teacher vacancy for the 2016/17 school year. A number of policies were also reviewed.
- **Education Committee:** Education Committee minutes were submitted and reviewed. Bob Huttema reported on the activities of the committee. A revised committee mandate was reviewed and approved.
- **Membership Committee:** Neil Dykstra reported on the activities of the Membership Committee, including discussions with Credo Aid and the upcoming Golf Tournament.
- **IT Committee:** IT Committee minutes were submitted and reviewed. Tim Rook reported on the activities of the IT Committee, and presented a long term IT plan. The committee is currently working on implementing accountability software and internet filters at the school.
- **Next Meetings / Events:** The next regular Board meeting is planned for Monday, March 14, 2016.
- **Closing:** Fiona Jansen closed with thanksgiving prayer. Chris Hoff closed the meeting and thanked all for coming.

meeting were adopted.

- **Incoming/Outgoing Correspondence:** One incoming letter was received regarding prospective enrolment.
- **Principal's Report:** Otto Bouwman presented the Principal's Report for March 2016 and provided updates on staffing assignments and program delivery for the intermediate grades as well EA requirements for the 2016/17 school year. It was decided to advertise for an EA to replace Paige VanDelft for the remainder of the year, after she leaves in May.
- **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman's report for

March 2016 was received for information. Chris Hoff reported on his activities as chairman.

- **General Business:** A number of matters were discussed including a report outlining financial trends over the last ten years and a FISA/SCSBC workshop related to Society Act changes. Reports were received from the recent Board/Staff visits. Some General Administration and Finance policies were also reviewed.
- **Education Committee:** The minutes of a recent Education Committee meeting were received for information. Mindert Deboer was appointed to the Education Committee. Positive reports were received on classroom visits.
- **Membership Committee:** Neil Dykstra noted that promotional materials are at the printer,

and the Golf Tournament Committee has begun planning for the annual tournament.

- **Maintenance Committee:** The minutes of a recent Maintenance Committee meeting were received for information.
- **Finance Committee:** The income statement for February 29, 2016 and the minutes of a recent Finance Committee meeting were submitted and reviewed. Oliver Hansma reported on the activities of the Finance Committee, including preliminary budget planning for the 2016/17 school year.
- **Next Meetings / Events:** The next regular Board meeting is planned for April 11, 2016.
- **Closing:** Neil Dykstra closed with thanksgiving prayer. Chris Hoff adjourned the meeting and thanked all for coming.

Credo Aid Connection....

Mother's Day Fair -Saturday, May 7 · 8am-12pm . Please come on out to join the fun and to support Credo Aid's major fundraising event of the year! There will be something for everyone!

Silent Auction

We have had an amazing community response to our silent auction donation requests! Community donations are well over \$3000 in total retail value, and include a variety of quality, family friendly auction items. Community donators include:

- BC Lions
- Vancouver Canadians Baseball Club
- Science World
- Trinity SAMC Theatre
- Gallery 7 Theatre
- Brown's Social House
- The Great Escape
- Castle Fun Park
- Go Bananas
- Willowbrook Lanes
- Poppy Estate Golf Course
- Pagoda Ridge Golf Course
- Back in the Saddle Again horseback riding
- Glen Valley Stables
- Safeguard Martial Arts
- AAA Easypark Driving Academy
- Toy Traders

- Mastermind Toys
- Tracycakes
- Mathnasium
- Focus on the Family ... and many more!

We would love to include some of your diverse talents and offerings! Do you have a teen who could donate an evening or day of babysitting? A home based business with a gift basket for auction? Maybe you could offer an hour or two of tutoring or of another service? Are you able and willing to hold a dinner party in your home? Maybe you could offer a unique outing or experience... boating, flying, a vacation pad or cabin! We would love to hear from you! Please contact Vanessa at vanessarook@hotmail.com or 604.626.0439 for any questions or donation offers. Thank you!

Fair Volunteers

In order to pull off this exciting event, we will again need our whole community's involvement! From kitchen help, bakers, vendor and booth operators - whether you are a teen, parent or grandparent, there is sure to be a position just right for you! A complete volunteer schedule can be found at <http://vols.pt/88fJe4>. Simply provide your email address (for reminder communications) and scroll through the available volunteer positions. Select a shift/task (or two!) that works for you and sign up. Thanks for helping!

Craft Table

The Craft & Gift Table is still looking for some more creations. Signs, jewelry, baby & kid stuff, cards, home décor etc are all welcome! Please contact Pearl Hoff - cphoff@telus.net to contribute.

Colouring Contest

We are again hosting a colouring contest for primary and intermediate students. Copies can be picked up at the school office or printed off from the attached file in *leaflets*.

Gift Baskets

It's fun to see all the things being brought in by students so for these themed baskets! We can't wait to put them together for the silent auction! Parents and students,

please remember to send all items by Wed., April 27th. Mother's Day Contact: credofair@gmail.com

The 'great little coupon book' is coming to Credo!

Starting April 25th the kids will be bringing home a book and a fundraiser package to help their fundraising efforts. They will have until May 13th to sell these to relatives, neighbours and friends. This coupon book includes a lot of local coupons for various stores and restaurants and cost only \$10! More info can be found at www.thegreatlittlecouponbook.ca. The coupon books will also be available for purchase at the Mother's Day Fair at the Credo Aid table along with gift cards from the gift card program. Watch your child's agenda for the fundraising package with more info! If you have any questions please email or call Kait Scheper at scheperik@gmail.com or 778-908-6084.

Thank you for supporting our school!

CCES Calendar Update

April	29	Pro-D Day	no school
	29	Quad-School Public Speaking	
May	2	Kindergarten Orientation Day	
	5	Ascension Day	
	5	Ascension Day Assembly 2 p.m.	
	13	Sports Day -McLeod Park	
	15	Pentecost	
	16	Music Evening 7:00 p.m.-Langley Church	
	19	Grade 8 Day	
	20	Pro-D Day	no school
	23	Victoria Day	no school
	25	School membership meeting	
June	6	Track & Field Day Gr. 6 & 7	
	24	Last day of school, report cards, grad	
	27-29	Administrative days	no school

BROUGHT TO YOU BY CREDO AID

THE MOTHER'S DAY

F A I R

SATURDAY MAY 7TH 2016

BREAKFAST 8:00 - 10:30

GAMES 8:30 - 11:30

CREDO CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

LOTS OF GAMES

CONTESTS

DUNK
TANK

BOUNCY CASTLE

TOT
ZONE

CRAFT TABLE

**SNACK
SHACK**

COLORING CONTEST | **VENDORS**

SILENT AUCTION

CAR
WASH

HAIR CUTS

DEMOS

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

👉 GRILLS GO UNTIL 10:30 👈

MORE GAMES MORE FOOD
MORE FAMILY FUN

CONTACT US AT: CREDOFAIR@GMAIL.COM