



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 first edition of *Branches* in 2014! As a school and school community, we live in interesting times, with much discussion on the strategic direction of the school and our place among the schools in the Fraser Valley. It promises to be another interesting year ahead - one in which an ample supply of wisdom will be required.

Review of Membership Meeting held January 22 2014

We would like to thank membership for a constructive meeting held on January 22 2014. For those that were not present, the Board presented an update on work done to date with expansion plans, and proposed to scale back the four-room (three classroom) expansion plan to two classrooms, plus a portable. One of the primary reasons for this was a requirement to introduce sprinklers for an expansion that exceeded 2,850 square feet (and related costs!). However, the Board also feels that direction gives us flexibility, and is most closely aligned with the overall vision articulated by the Joint Strategic Planning Committee. At the meeting, membership voted unanimously in favour with the revised proposal. We are very grateful to receive this level of support and mandate from membership - and certainly hope that we will receive continued support with delivery of the expansion.

Along the same lines, the budget for the expansion indicates that approximately \$285,000 is required to deliver the expansion - as a combination of in-kind labour / materials and fundraising. The Board expects to approach membership regarding this in the near future - so please keep tuned!

Program Delivery for September 2014

In the last edition of *Branches*, we noted that the Board is inclined to split the September 2014 Grade 4 and Grade 1 classes. This would leave the Grade 5 class one student above the maximum pupil-teacher ratio. At this time we continue to explore options for additional help for Linda and Natasja for the next school year. At the same time, plans to split the Grade 1 and 4 classes also depend upon finding a suitable teacher for these grades. Officially, our closing date for applications ended on

January 28th 2014 - but we would be willing to extend the deadline for a few days if applications were to come in late. To that end - please do not be shy about spreading news about this opportunity by word of mouth!

Use of Psalms and Hymns at CCES

While the Board has spent some time on 'non-routine' matters over the last few years such as the Joint Strategic Planning Committee and school expansion, we also have some 'routine' matters on our agenda as well. One task on the to-do list for the Education Committee and the Board this year is to review the use of psalms and hymns in the school - both as memory work but also in daily devotions. Central to this discussion will be the use of the songs of the covenant among God's covenant children. The committee and Board will be working with material received from a number of schools that have gone through a similar process, as well as correspondence from membership. We pray for a blessing upon this work over the next few months.

Role of the Development Committee

Elsewhere in this edition of *Branches* you will also see a notice seeking a team of volunteers that would be tasked with delivery of the annual Golf Tournament. In the past this has been an important fundraiser for Credo, and last year the net proceeds exceeded \$15,000. These funds have been used for a variety of purposes, such as funding the purchase of computers for the school. While the Golf Tournament clearly serves an important function in the school, it has also come to dominate the agenda for the Development Committee - perhaps at the expense of other parts of its mandate. As such, the Development Committee is exploring a different model for delivery of the Golf Tournament - hopefully through a sub-committee. This would free up the Development Committee to focus on other parts of its mandate such as affirming the school in our covenant community. To this end we ask that you please consider if you can help with the Golf Tournament.

As Board, we covet your prayers and support as we strive to meet the challenges ahead this year.

From the Principal....

Heres Snijder

Seek the LORD and his strength;
seek his presence continually!
Remember the wondrous works that he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,
Ps. 105: 4,5, ESV.

Story Time!

On January 6, we started off with a school wide opening assembly. With renewed vigor we embraced our year theme ("We are God's fellow workers: we are God's field - and God's workmanship") and went back to work. We reassembled on January 20th in the gym for the launching of the Book Week event. Various activities were initiated as part of Book Week, including a visit of local author, Kathleen MacMillan. She spent all day Friday the 24th at school interacting with all students. Her engaging presentations very well received.

Everyone loves and lives 'story'.

Why story and story telling? Story is a primary language of experience. Telling and listening to a story has the same structure as our experience. Experience has a narrative quality. The episodes of our lives take place on after another just like a story. We live in stories. Our lives are like an unfolding story. Storytelling creates community. Persons who tell each other stories become friends. And men and women who know the same stories deeply are bound together in special ways. Kathleen MacMillan emphasized that our lives are part of the Great Story of God who calls His people to respond to Him and to developments in our lives in ways that further the 'Great Conversation'. Ms Macmillan explains it well on page 28 and 29 of her book *Samantha's First Story*. (See elsewhere in this edition of *Branches* - included with permission of the author)

Stories become most meaningful when the Story of Christ's redemptive work intersects with our own personal lives. The stories of Jesus of Nazareth were formed by Spirit inspired persons who were part of Israel's storytelling tradition. The unique character of these stories has been confirmed in the experience of millions of people over the ages. Psalm 78 is real today when we engage in, and share with our children Grand Story told and modeled by our Redeemer (Luke 10:25-37).

Our CCES library is a gold mine for great stories. Our librarians continue to work diligently to keep the collection current and relevant to the general mission of CCES. The contributions of Mrs. Sita VanderPol, Joyce Meerstra, Pauline and Helen Bulthuis, Jackie VanOene, Esther VanderGugten and Leslie Scholtens are very much appreciated. To those who have helped out

pre-reading new acquisitions: a tip o' the hat to you as well!

Memory Work

Deuteronomy 5 and 2 Timothy 3:16 emphasize the crucial importance of memorizing Scripture. The word 'remember' appears 231 times in the Bible ... and 'forget' 64 times. Clearly, the Holy Spirit attaches considerable value to our ability to memorize. Hearing the Word, singing Scripture, and storing it in long-term memory plays an important part in our faith development. While instilling faith is beyond the scope of teacher's duties (we leave it to the Holy Spirit), we are charged with the task to teach the next generation (Ps. 78) about the great deeds of the Lord. At Credo we are intentional about instilling an awareness of God's deeds of creation, redemption and consummation by means of regular memory work.

Memory work, Music and the brain.... Singing is an effective vehicle to store essential information into memory. "... The full effect of music on memory is becoming clearer as researchers continue to study the brain. Attaching *information* to *emotions* enhances memory and recall. The memory structure, the hippocampus, is located in the limbic system. It makes sense to use music as a way to store information in long-term memory because both music and memory are located in the same area as the brain. Think about this: how did each of us learn the alphabet? That alphabet song has stayed with us forever. From where did that tune come? ...

The mind enjoys rhythm and rhyme. Taking new vocabulary and putting it to a familiar tune will help our students learn and remember.¹

Memorizing Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs² that verbalize essential components of a personal faith in the risen Savior is essential and beneficial to the process of faith development. Members of the Education Committee are reviewing the current Memory work program for the remainder of this year. While there is general satisfaction with the overall program

¹ Sprenger, M. Brain-based teaching in the digital age. ASCD, Alexandria Virginia, 2010 - p. 95.

² Ephesians 5:9: Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,

and the way it has become integrated across the curriculums, the matter of proper balance between assigned Psalms, Hymns and Scripture portions continues to be topic of discussion.

Foundation Skills Assessment

The Foundation Skills Assessment is an annual province-wide assessment of British Columbia students' academic skills, and provides a snapshot of how well BC students are learning foundation skills in Reading Comprehension, Writing, and Numeracy.

The main purpose of the assessment is to help the province, school districts, schools and school planning councils evaluate how well students are achieving basic skills, and make plans to improve student achievement. FSA is designed and developed by British Columbia educators. The skills assessed are linked to the provincial curriculum and provincial performance standards. The assessment is administered annually to Grade 4 and 7 students in public and provincially funded independent schools.

Professional Development: Engaging the Brain

Last Friday, teacher from the four Reformed schools in the Valley gathered together to learn about, among many other topics, how the brain processes information, how to boost attention, and how to increase the capacity of one's memory. Stay tuned for more detailed information on this fascinating topic of

neuroscience and how it impacts our views on learning and teaching.

CCES, ARPA and the Loyola case

Included in this issue of *Branches*, please find an update of the latest developments surrounding the Loyola case.

A Visit to Harrison Pointe Residence

Grade 4 students and Mr. Scholtens paid a memorable visit to this senior citizen centre. Some reflections and reactions are included in this *Branches*. By all accounts, this was an experience worth repeating. Thank you, Mr. Scholtens for taking the initiative to prepare students and engage them meaningfully with the residents, while sharing the Good News of Christ's incarnation.

What lies ahead?

As we transition in to February, we are looking forward to a skating Day on February 7, and a nice and steady month of regular routine, with a School Spirit Day included for good measure. Do you enjoy drama? Put Feb. 26 on you calendar: Grade 6 students will put on a full length play, *The Princess King*, for all interested parents and supporters. We continue to be grateful for health, safety, freedom and supportive prayer.

A Visit to Harrison Pointe

Before Christmas the grade four class went to Harrison Pointe Retirement Residence to spread some Christmas cheer. The residents had a great time to the point of inviting us back before the end of the school year. We do plan to take them up on this invitation. The students also had a great time. Here are a few responses from them.

It was fun to sing because I like singing and bringing joy to other people. What I really noticed was the man in front. He was clapping along and smiling. His wife was singing along. I think both of them had a great time. Kyah

The faces of the residents were happy just like me. The best part of the singing was the harmony. It's the best part of music in my opinion. Anna

If Paula asked us to come again, I would. When we did it yesterday, I thought it was quite short. I would like to meet the people after lots of people were smiling and singing! Genieva

I would want to go again. I definitely noticed the faces of the people I was singing with. It would be cool if they could come to our assembly. Sean

After Harrison Pointe, I felt a little joy inside me. I did have

lots of fun and the best part was eating the gingerbread man and the candy canes. I would be very excited to go back because it would be nice to meet more people. Kaycie

I enjoy it because a lady was smiling at me and I want to be her pen-pal. I don't know her name. I would love to go back and visit. I hope the woman that was smiling comes to the grade 4 assembly next Friday. Sarah

How I felt is great! And yes, I did enjoy it because it was fun to see all their faces filled with joy. Yes... I had to admit it was fun. Yes, it would be wonderful if we went again. Ethan

I loved it because people were singing and I noticed one person's face. She was crying. If I was allowed to live there, I would say yes. Thomas

Short Report of Board Meeting

Short Report of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
of Credo Christian Elementary School
December 10, 2013

- Opening and Welcome: The Chairman, Chris Hoff welcomed all the Directors and Principal Heres Snijder to the meeting. No official opening, as this meeting was preceded by the Legal Authority Meeting.
- Agenda Approval: The agenda for the regular board meeting was approved.
- Minutes and Short Report: The Minutes and Short Report of the November 12, 2013 Board meeting were adopted.
- Incoming/Outgoing Correspondence: Two outgoing letters were sent to a member.
- Principal's Report: Heres Snijder presented the Principal's Report for December 2013 including activities related to staffing changes, international student policy, and the CCRTC.
- Chairman's Report: The Chairman's report for December 2013 was received for information. Chris Hoff reported on his activities as chairman.
- General Business: A number of matters were discussed including the FISA/MOE fall meeting and fundraising options for the new expansion project. A decision was made to fill a staffing vacancy. A decision was also made on program delivery for the 2014-15 school year.
- Education Committee: Wilfred Bulthuis reported on the activities of the Education Committee, and gave a positive summary report of the first term classroom visits.
- Ad-Hoc Expansion Committee: Tim Bontkes presented a proposed drawing for the new building expansion project. Discussions were had surrounding project timelines and various design items, including the staff room and an additional washroom.
- Finance Committee: Oliver Hansma reported on the activities of the Finance Committee. Transfer of the treasurer documents is ongoing.
- IT Committee: The minutes of a recent IT Committee meeting were received for information. Will VanOene reported on the activities of the IT Committee, including various IT projects that were completed over the summer.
- Development Committee: Ron Scheper reported on the activities of the Development Committee. The committee will be changing its focus to concentrate more on its core mandate of promoting CCES in the community.
- CCSTA: Al Leyenhorst has been appointed chairman of the CCSTA, and will present a full report to the board at the January meeting.
- Next Meetings / Events: The next regular Board meeting is planned for January 14, 2014.
- Closing: Oliver Hansma closed with thanksgiving prayer. Chris Hoff adjourned the meeting and thanked all for coming.

Development Committee - CCES Golf Tournament

The Development Committee is looking to establish a team of volunteers to help with the delivery of the Annual CCES Golf Tournament. In the past this has been an important fund raiser with proceeds supporting a variety of purposes to enhance our school and quality of education. We ask that you please consider if you can help support the Golf Tournament by participating in its delivery with the backing of the Development Committee. Your support will allow for the Development Committee to further focus on fulfilling its mandate such as affirming the school in our covenant community. Please contact Ron Scheper at rescheper@gmail.com for expressions of interest and/or more details.



School and the Christian Mind

Dr. F. G. Oosterhoff

Dr. Frederica G. Oosterhoff is a resident of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. She is a graduate of the University of Western Ontario, London, Canada, and of University College, London University, England, where she received a Ph.D. in European history. Now retired after serving as Principal of a local Reformed Christian highschool, she has for many years taught courses in Ancient and European history, Church history, and the history of ideas at the secondary and college levels. She is a member of the "Cornerstone" Canadian Reformed Church at Hamilton and a regular contributor to several Reformed periodicals.

Feeling, spontaneity, and experience are in among Christians, and the use of the mind is out. That is the complaint of an increasing number of Christian authors. They admit that emotion plays a legitimate role in religion, and in life in general, but they do not want feeling to crowd out thought. The neglect of the mind, they warn us, and the failure to develop a specifically Christian mind, inevitably lead to the secularization of the church.

In the present article I intend to address that issue. Specifically, I want to pay attention to the need of developing a Christian mind - that is a Christian manner of thinking - in our young people. The responsibility for this work is shared by the church, the home, and the school, but rather than making this article too wide-ranging, I will deal only with the task that the school has in this regard. I have divided this article into two parts and will begin by summarizing them.

(1) Anti-intellectualism may be a problem in the church, but the trend is not confined to Christians. It is part of the general world-view in our post-modern world and is encouraged by the media, the entertainment industry, and indeed by practically all the powers that mould public opinion. These powers include the people who decide on educational policy, and the first part of this paper is devoted to that topic. Having established that our educational planners tend to give short shrift to the things of the mind, we will look at the reasons why this is so.

(2) In the second place, we will consider how the Christian school should respond to the attack upon thinking in general, and upon Christian thinking in particular.

Ministry policy

Content and process

In order to think as a Christian, one has to be able to think. Teaching young people to do just that was traditionally one of the main functions of the school. I am afraid that it no longer is. Increasingly in recent decades, educational theory discouraged the development of independent

thinking. One of the means employed for that purpose is the subordination of content to process. Let me briefly define these two terms. By content I mean academic content or curriculum: the study of languages and literature, history and geography, mathematics and science, and so on. In brief, it is the stuff that, if properly taught, furnishes the mind and enriches it, intellectually, morally, and emotionally. It is also the stuff that allows students to hone their thinking skills in a serious manner. This academic content, then, receives increasingly less emphasis in Ministry policy, while process takes over.

The term "process" can mean two rather different things. Firstly, it refers to learning skills, teaching methodology, and so on. This type of process is a necessary part of the school's business, and we have no quarrel with it, provided it does not squeeze out content. The problem lies with the second type of process. That one has little if anything to do with the school's traditional function. Rather than facilitating the teaching of content, it interferes with it. This second type of process includes the teaching of life and social skills. Much attention is also given to the inculcation of politically correct attitudes with respect to radical feminism, so-called "alternative lifestyles," and similar matters. In addition, quite a bit of emphasis has, in the past, been placed on the need that students learn to question authority and work for the radical transformation of society.

Socializing the masses

That goal of transforming society has not been abandoned. I have the impression, however, that it no longer receives the same emphasis as it used to. The reason, I think, is not only parental protest, although that has played a role. But there is also the fact that we live in the 1990s, a decade that provides us with serious economic and social challenges. In the economic field we are faced with global competition, high unemployment, and an uncertain job market. Socially the situation is also volatile, and that partly because of the changing economic situation. Unemployment is high among young people, minority groups, and the less well trained. This leads to social discontent, crime, and strife among groups and regions.

It is this type of problems, I believe, that play an increasingly important role in educational policies. These policies have two goals. Firstly, they are to ensure that all students are socially well adapted, feel that they can succeed in school, and therefore don't drop out. This the ministry hopes to accomplish by such policies as the downgrading of curriculum so that all students can master it, by a heavy stress on process, and by de-streaming - that is, by placing all students in the same group, rather than dividing them according to ability. Equality is emphasized. Indeed, there is a constant stress on the doctrine that there must be equality of opportunity not only, but also equality of outcome. Everybody must have a chance to do as well as the next one. Once the school has managed to enforce this equality, the reasoning appears to be, everybody will be successful in the workplace.

Outcome-based education

Of course, enforced equality will not by itself make our workers more competitive and eliminate the spectre of unemployment. Educational planners know that. Attempting to deal more effectively with not only the social but also the economic challenges, they have lately been giving quite a bit of attention to a new approach to schooling known as Outcome-Based Education (OBE). This is the invention of an American sociologist by the name of William Spady and aims at the production of well-socialized consumers and well-trained, adaptable producers. Traditional curriculum plays only a secondary role in this system, and evaluation is not based on the students' acquisition of specific skills and content, but on their having mastered what Spady calls Complex Life Performance Roles. These outcomes have to do with the students' ability to perform well in the society and market place of the future. And they are sufficiently general that teachers will be able to pass everyone, even if some students may have to spend more time in school than others.

Spady insists that if his system is followed, then everyone, no matter what his or her native ability, can reach the goal. And once they have done that at school, students will be able to take on the world. They will be prepared for the challenges of our post-industrial and ever-changing economy. Indeed, some of Spady's disciples assure us that the result will be a social paradise. Once the system is in place, we may expect the end of unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, and crime.

An explanation

Ministries of Education are interested in such experiments like OBE in part, I fear, for ideological reasons. The "progressive" element has long been prominent among educational planners, and that element has traditionally attempted to enforce equality not just of opportunity, which is a most laudable goal, but also of result, which is a utopian one. But it is only fair to add that, as we already noticed, practical considerations play a role as well, and

that these are weighty ones. Traditionally only the more academically inclined student attended secondary school. In today's economy every worker, if he or she wants to find and hang on to a job, has to have at least a high school diploma. And the schools have no choice but to accept and accommodate every applicant. In short, when criticizing the Ministry's policy we have to keep in mind that it is working under real restraints and that there are no easy answers to today's educational problems.

This realization does not have to prevent us, however, from questioning the means educational planners use in dealing with the problems. It is my contention, firstly, that these means are ill chosen and will not lead to the predicted result; and secondly, that even if they did so, the cure would be far worse than the disease.

Brave New World?

Indeed, I am afraid that they will have disastrous results. When reading up on these issues I couldn't help thinking of the scenario that Aldous Huxley painted in his novel *Brave New World*. You probably know the story. It is about a society that practises selective breeding and in-vitro fertilization. The planners manipulate every individual from conception onward, and so ensure that all will execute the role assigned to them effectively, happily, and without questioning. All are equally well adjusted and equally contented, no matter what their ability or socio-economic role. And if discontent does threaten, the problem is solved by the wonder drug soma, a combination of tranquilizer and happiness pill.

Huxley wrote his book in 1932 and thought that the situation he portrayed would not come to pass until some centuries hence. He was too optimistic. Barely 60 years later all the technology needed to realize the Huxleyan night-mare exists already. More ominously, a Huxleyan type of social engineering is, as we have seen, beginning to make a lot of sense to some of our social planners. No, I am not suggesting that the people at the Ministry of Education consciously want to dehumanize our students. Far from it. They are well intentioned: all they want is to ensure that these students become well adjusted, successful, and governable citizens. But they don't seem to realize that such expertly socialized citizens will be little more than robots; that they will become, as one author put it, "fodder of the service economy" (Martin Levin in the *Globe and Mail*, Dec. 7, 1995). And that is uncomfortably close to the fate suffered by the inhabitants of Huxley's brave new world.

Developing the mind

The importance of curriculum

So what are we to do? We must make sure of three things. The first one is that our schools continue to be parental ones: in the final analysis it is the parents who decide on the type of education their children will receive. In the

second place, our schools must continue to be Christian schools, not just in name but also in fact. That means that the Scriptures illuminate whatever we teach; that they are a light on our path, also our intellectual path. And in the third place, our schools must make sure that curriculum, particularly the transmission of knowledge, is and always remains a primary concern. This third point is the one that I want to concentrate on.

Why is curriculum of such great importance? For two reasons. Firstly, it allows us to know about God's work in nature and history: that is, His work of creation, providence, and government. And secondly, it acquaints us with thousands of years of human experience and achievement, an inheritance from which we may learn and on which we may build. The aspect of building, incidentally, is important. The transmission of knowledge does not imply (as some people seem to think) a reactionary adherence to customs and practices of the past, or a static view with respect to scientific and other knowledge. Rather, acquaintance with perennial values and past accomplishments is a precondition both for the establishment of practices suitable to our times, and for the advance of knowledge in general. We don't have to reinvent the wheel and should not attempt to do so. We should, at least at the primary and secondary levels, teach and study curriculum instead.

Now you may want to object that teaching curriculum, particularly as it refers to human achievements, can be a risky business. After all, much human wisdom is, as the apostle Paul calls it, "wisdom of this world," which means that it ignores and opposes the wisdom of God. It is also true that the most savage attacks upon Christianity have been and still are being waged in the name of human reason. And there is no question about it: our students will encounter the results of anti-Christian reasoning in practically every subject they study.

They will also encounter them, however, if they do not study curriculum content, for anti-Christian ideas reach them via other sources: via radio and TV, book and magazine, video and Internet. I am not exaggerating when I say that never has there been a generation which was so exposed to "the spiritual forces of evil," to use the expression of Ephesians 6, as the present one. Because of the universality of education and the great advances in communication technology, information reaches people from all sides. "Plain men," C.S. Lewis once wrote, "are forced to bear burdens which plain men were never expected to bear before." Which means, he added, that they must struggle so much the harder to find the truth.

To arm our students for this struggle is a primary task of the Christian school. And in order to fulfil that task it must teach curriculum content. It must do so in order to acquaint students with the ideas that assault them, and in order to teach them how to deal with these ideas. I

chose the verb "acquaint" on purpose, for an important teaching strategy - increasingly so in the higher grades - is guided confrontation. There must be confrontation. In order to discern the spirits, students must know what these spirits are and how they came about, and in order to analyse ideas, they must find out what these ideas entail. And they learn about these spirits and these ideas, and about their origins, through curriculum content. There must not be confrontation, however, without guidance. Students can't be left to do the discerning and testing and analysing on their own. They need the help of their teachers. No less importantly, they need the very curriculum content that acquainted them with the ideas and their origins in the first place.

In the time that remains I will try to prove this last point by providing some illustrations of the role which curriculum content can and should play in this aspect of Christian education. In other words, I will try to show how it can and should contribute to the development of a Christian mind in our students.

Curriculum and the Christian mind

Teaching curriculum content means, as we have noted, transmission of knowledge. And transmission of knowledge, in turn, implies a historical approach to the subjects we teach. It also implies the importance of history as a separate discipline. Much could be said about the ways in which the teaching of history can help us in arming our students, but only a few points can be mentioned. One is that the past speaks of mankind's wisdom and folly, of obedience to God's Word and of disobedience, and of the consequences of these attitudes. The study of history therefore teaches students, directly and indirectly, how to act and what to avoid.

It also enables students to analyse the ideas that govern our times, for modern ideas have their roots in the past. Old heresies don't die; they simply hibernate and reappear in season. By studying past developments students can learn why and how ideas arise and what they lead to. And that applies not only to religious ideas but to all manner of theories, including scientific ones.

Furthermore, history acquaints us with human schemes that have gone awry, and therefore helps us relativize the exaggerated claims of modern thought. It teaches us, as Blaise Pascal put it more than three centuries ago, that "Reason's first step is the recognition that there is an infinite number of things which are beyond reason. . . ."

In brief, the benefit of the study of the past is its capacity to enlarge our experience and to teach us wisdom. And what applies to historical studies applies to other subjects, such as literature. I already provided one example, Huxley's *Brave New World*. That brief novel has warned untold numbers of the dangers of turning human beings into mindless producers and consumers, programmed by a

planning elite with the help of an increasingly clever technology. And the warning issued by Huxley's book is only one example of the benefits of the study of literature. There are many more, and they apply to all grade levels.

To take away curriculum content, therefore, is to rob students of an inheritance to which they are entitled and which they cannot do without. It is also to deny them the opportunity of developing their thinking skills. For thinking cannot be done in a vacuum. Human reason, one of God's most precious gifts to man, is a tool and needs something to work on, and much of what it does work on is curriculum content.

In brief: academic subjects provide us with material that allows us to discern the spirits, to "escape the tyranny of the present" (Cicero), and to think independently. And all these benefits run counter to the effects of the type of schooling planned by today's educational leaders, for that is a schooling which will provide future citizens with ready-made, homogenized attitudes. These planners, whether they realize it or not, ignore the citizens' own responsibility. They make possible a situation where Big Brother is in control as the one who knows best. And Big Brother, I assure you, is by definition totalitarian and anti-Christian.

Of course, Christian thinking is not concerned with intellectual issues only. I have stressed that aspect because I had to deal with education, but I do not want to leave you with the idea that I have exhausted the topic. Much more is at issue in the development of the Christian mind. Ultimately, Christian thinking is covenantal thinking,

which means that it takes seriously God's claim upon all of our life. It therefore also has to do with the Christians' choice of entertainment, their use of leisure, their use of technology; indeed their attitude to life as a whole. As one author put it (Harry Blamires, in *The Christian Mind*), it implies that we see the things of this world under the aspect of eternity.

It is good to keep that warning in mind. We live in a secular, materialistic society with many opportunities, and this does not fail to affect us. We run the danger of forgetting what our forebears knew so well, namely that our earthly existence is brief, and that it serves as a training ground, a preparation for the world to come. Christian thinking implies the realization that there is no profit, only irreparable loss, if we gain the world at the cost of forfeiting our soul. To teach that, and to model it, is an essential duty of Christian educators.

Some references:

Peter C. Emberley & Waller R. Newell, [Bankrupt Education: The Decline of Liberal Education in Canada](#). Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.

Paul Gagnon, "[What children should learn.](#)" *The Atlantic Monthly*, Dec. 1995, pp. 65-78.

Various articles on Outcome-Based Education in issues of *Educational Leadership*.

Various reports on Outcome-Based Education, the Common Curriculum, and similar issues, prepared on behalf of the Canadian Reformed Teachers Association and the Ontario Principals Association.

Kindergarten Registration

Registration for the 2014-2015 CCES Kindergarten class is now underway.



If your child will be 5 years of age before Dec. 31, 2014 and you wish to enroll at Credo Christian Elementary School for September 2014, please complete the CCES Registration Form (please contact the school if you have not received a copy). Please note that we require a copy of your child's birth certificate and a copy of your driver's license as proof of your BC residency. You are welcome to drop by the school to have these copies made. Please return the completed form and document copies to the school by Feb. 7, 2014. If you prefer not to enroll you child, please let us know by phone ((604) 530-1131) or email (cces@telus.net).

From *Samantha's First Story*

Kathleen McMillan

Everyone has a story to tell. We all have events in our lives that make us who we are. Like BlueBeary, we go out into the world and experience things that change us. Often we are changed in small yet significant ways and it is important to learn how to share those stories.

Learning to recognize the important elements of a story and to tell it clearly is one of the goals of Open Eyes Books and, in particular, of the Show-and-Tell series. This series of ten books uses a child's classroom experience of Show-and-Tell to teach observation and communication skills through storytelling, preparing children to join the Great Conversation.* Show-and-Tell is a simple and fun way for parents and teachers to encourage children to share their life experiences.

When I speak to older children, many of them fondly remember participating in Show-and-Tell during their primary years. Show-and-Tell is memorable partly because it is among a child's first opportunities to participate in public speaking, and partly there is a storyteller in each of us waiting for a chance to speak.

To prepare for Show-and-Tell at home we can take the time to listen to each other's stories. Children love to hear about when Grandma was a girl or when Daddy was a boy. Begin early to share your experiences with the children in your life and ask them to share their own stories too.

When adults and children discuss who, what, when, where, why and how questions about experiences and keepsakes, the thought process involved becomes natural to the children's critical thinking and communication skills. Such discussions increase vocabulary and encourage the reflective aspects of thought and speech. They also strengthen relationship bonds as adults and children discuss the things they share.

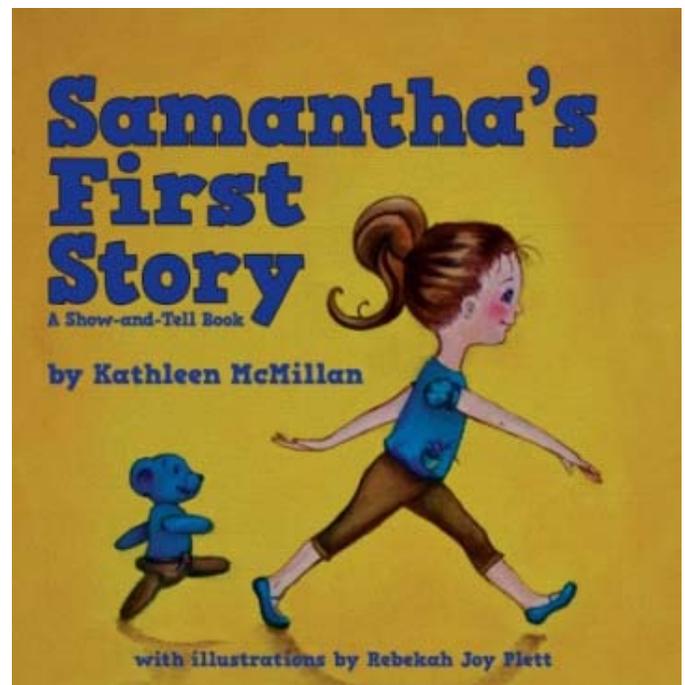
In BlueBeary, Samantha and BlueBeary recognize that their first and favorite place of belonging is

together at home. Samantha begins at home observing her world and finding her story, starting to find her place in the Great Conversation. Through telling BlueBeary's story for Show-and-Tell she recognizes another place of belonging in her life: among her classmates.

As Samantha grows, her world will expand, she will find more people to share with and more things to share. With guidance, she will expand her vocabulary and her level of comfort talking to others, and she will recognize the important elements of her story, like family, friends, places and events.

My hope is that each person who reads my books and uses the discussion guides will find his or her voice in the Great Conversation. Thank you for helping children participate in that conversation.

Blessings,
Kathleen McMillan
Aldergrove, BC



Dear friends,

With thanksgiving to the Lord we are pleased to share the good news that the Supreme Court of Canada has granted the Association for Christian Educators and Schools Canada (ACES) intervener status in the Loyola case. With our last update, we had asked for your regular prayers that God will allow us to speak to the Court and that the judge He has selected to review our Motion might be favourably disposed and allow us to intervene. **God answered those prayers in the affirmative!**

When we filed our motion to intervene, the Government of Québec filed a response with the Court arguing that we ought not be allowed to intervene. (In fact, they argued that none of the interveners should be allowed.) Our legal team quickly drafted and filed a reply, demonstrating that we have a unique voice for the Court to hear and that we will be affected by the outcome of this case.

ARPA Canada is the organizing and leading member of ACES, a coalition which represents 313 confessional Christian schools and 11 post-secondary Christian institutions. Now that the Supreme Court has granted ACES intervener status, we are able to provide 10 pages of written legal arguments (called a factum) to the entire Court, on behalf of Christian educators and schools. After reviewing all written arguments from the eleven interveners, the Court will decide which, if any, interveners can also make oral arguments.

What is this case all about? As we explained in our fall tour, the Loyola case will have a greater impact on parents' authority in raising their children in the fear of the Lord than any other case in recent history. The province of Québec has ordered all schools and home schools to teach a class about ethics and religions. But **not only is it telling schools what to teach, it's also telling them exactly how to teach it.** All schools, including independent Christian institutions, have to set aside their worldview (as if that were possible) and teach the course from a secular perspective. They aren't allowed to raise our Lord Jesus Christ above other religions and must encourage students to "create their own religion," among other things.

At stake in this case is parental authority itself. **This case could set a precedent in law that allows any provincial government to do the same thing that Québec is doing** if the Supreme Court should side with the Québec government by refusing to overturn the Québec Court of Appeal decision (which found the government's requirements and curriculum reasonable). Provincial governments are increasingly taking over the role of parents, requiring all students to be taught what it believes is true or moral, and even removing the freedom of parents to take their children out from objectionable classes. (If you've missed our previous updates on this case, go to www.ARPACanada.ca and search "Loyola" for more information on this case.)

The court hearing is set for March 24 but our factum is due on March 10. Please pray for all those who are preparing written arguments for the Court, as well as for the hearts of our Supreme Court Justices. May justice and freedom prevail so that God's Name can be properly taught to all our children.

If you would like to support ARPA's work, including this intervention, donations can be made by credit card online or by mailing a cheque to the address above. We want to give a big thank you to all those who have already donated so generously – your contributions help us do this work. Thank you for your help in sharing this concerning issue with your contacts and for your prayers. May God continue to richly bless your schools so that His Name is honoured in the lives of our students and children!

On behalf of the ARPA team,

André Schutten, HonB.A., LL.B., LL.M.
Legal Counsel & Ontario Director
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Our Grade Two Dinosaur Adventure

On January the 3rd, grade two received a mysterious note that said "We look forward to visiting you soon. Love T and family." The class was a buzz as they tried to figure out who T was, and why they were coming to visit. Ideas of: Miss Bosch's parents, Miss Bosma, Tinker bell, the TAs, the teachers, and many others, circled the classroom. Monday morning came, and the students soon realized their guests. Seven dinosaurs had come for a week visit! Monday the dinosaurs had gotten into the paper and markers to create a master piece. On Tuesday the dinosaurs were found trying to free Stripes from his cage. Wednesday brought a campfire, and Thursday: centers. By Friday, the students were anticipating something big; and big they got. Spinosaurus had gone missing! There were dinosaurs everywhere trying to find their friend. A mysterious code and a top notch search party led us to the Principal's office, where Spinosaurus was spotted playing chess! A week filled with imagination, anticipation and a lot of laughter ended as Miss Bosch sent those dinos packing. Here is just a snippet of the week from the eyes of some of the students.

We walked into the classroom and the dinosaurs had: Made a pretty cool picture. And a BIG mess. They even played scrabble. The mess was paper and felts everywhere! ~ Austin (day 1)

We walked into the classroom and the dinosaurs had: Tied another dino to a piece of string and lowered him into Stripes' cage to steal him. One of them was reading a book, and two other dinos had signs. It was so funny! ~ Robin (day 2)

We walked into the classroom and the dinosaurs had: A campfire. And they were camping. And they were playing Blokus. And two

were reading a book and one of them was eating a marshmallow. And 2 of them were in sock. It was so so funny! ~ Karoline (day 3)

We walked into the classroom and the dinosaurs had: Been playing centers. Three of them had been playing twister, and two had been finishing a puzzle, and two had been building a tower, and one had been in the blocks. ~Paul (day 4)

We walked into the classroom and the dinosaurs had: When I walked in the classroom in the morning, the dinosaurs came into our classroom. There were 11 dinosaurs. One is hanging on the projector, one is on Stripes' cage, one is by the garbage, one is hanging up posters, and one has a flashlight looking into a folder! One of the dinos is missing! ~ Michaela (day 5)



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Fee Structure 2013-2014

Membership	110.00	Kindergarten	260.00
Elem. (1-3)	470.00	Elem (4-7)	490.00
Junior High	635.00	Senior High	685.00

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