



ST. JOHN PAUL II ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

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Principal's Message

HAPPY BELATED THANKSGIVING TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES. I hope your long weekend provided you a chance to reflect on all the wonderful blessings God has bestowed upon us. This past weekend, our Pastor, Fr. Paul, talked about giving thanks for the wonderful country we live and to never take this for granted.

This newsletter, and those that follow, represents an opportunity to provide all those associated with and/or are interested in St. John Paul II Academy with updates on how we are proceeding. I recognize that whenever you start something new there are many questions and legitimate concerns—this newsletter is an attempt to keep you up-to-date with what is happening. Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have any concerns. I am primarily located in the CISVA Superintendent's Office at the JP II Pastoral Centre and also have a temporary office space at St. Bernadette's school that I can utilize for parent meetings.

There has been a lot happening since I officially started over two months ago in August and I can sincerely tell you it has been one of the most fulfilling projects I have had the pleasure to be associated with in Catholic Education. Every day, in my current location at the CISVA Superintendent's office, I take note of the bigger than life size bronze statue of our patron—St. John Paul II—and I am inspired by the words on the plaque beneath it which reads: "**Be not afraid**". For a project of this magnitude, and all of the challenges that we have dealt with and need to deal with, these three words provide a source of inspiration and encouragement. This project has been a long time coming and we are full steam ahead in making it happen.

It is important to note that while I am officially a staff of one, there are many people who are behind the scenes assisting me every step of the way. I am particularly impressed with Mr. Troy Van Vliet, the Head of our Building Committee, and the true visionary behind this project, who is a tireless advocate for ensuring that the new school comes to fruition. Other volunteers, like Silveria Roselli and Al Pavlovic deserve so much thanks. The same can be said about the Archbishop, Pastors and Principals whose support and prayers have been very helpful. I would be remiss if I did not include the fantastic support of the CISVA Superintendent's office—led by Dan Moric and Mike Donelson. Without their support, this project would not become a reality. I tell you this so you know that there are many people who are working on your behalf every day so that we can officially start in September 2018.

As we move into the month of October we have entered another phase of our Communication Plan which includes future Parent Information Sessions, an Open House, along with input from committed families and students on things such as the school uniform, nickname and other matters associated with the school.

Our three Parent Information Sessions at St. Bernadette's, Cloverdale Catholic, and Star of the Sea, attracted over 100 interested parents. They heard from myself, Archbishop Miller, Troy Van Vliet and Dan Moric as we provided updates and some impressive conceptual drawings and information about St. John Paul II Academy.

In the meantime, I would ask that you continue to keep all those associated with this wonderful project in your prayers.

God bless,

Mr. Michel DesLauriers
Principal

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Parent Information Sessions

Three Parent Information Sessions were held in September on separate nights at St. Bernadette's, Cloverdale Catholic and Star of the Sea. Those in attendance heard a rousing talk from Archbishop Miller about "why Catholic education" in which he made reference to the benchmarks that give a school a Catholic identity. These include the following:

- Inspired by a supernatural vision
- Founded on a Christian Anthropology
- Animated by Communion and Community
- Imbued with a Catholic Worldview throughout its curriculum
- Sustained by Gospel Witness

In addition, parents heard from the newly hired Principal, Michel DesLauriers who has been involved in Catholic Education in the Archdiocese for over 35 years. In his presentation, he talked about his excitement for the new project but acknowledged that it is a daunting and challenging one as well. He spoke about his vision for the school and the leap of faith parents need to take in order for this project to come to fruition.

He spoke excitedly about the Head Start Grade 8 summer program he would like to provide for the incoming Grade 8 students in July 2018 as well as seeking input from parents about what they would like to see at St. John Paul II Academy.



Last, but certainly not least, Troy Van Vliet, the Head of the Building Committee, and the parent who has inspired this project, spoke well and provided parents with an update about the building project and the sense of urgency in having parents fully commit financially in order to get our school built sooner rather than later. His passion and enthusiasm for the new school was certainly evident.



Archbishop Miller expresses to parents what we are striving for at St. John Paul II Academy.

“ I know that some of you go to Catholic Schools. Why? So that you can more readily discover Christ and, in him, the full meaning of life. So that you can live life to the full. The Church has her schools because she wants to communicate Christ to you. She wants you to come to full maturity in him who is the perfect human being, and at the same time, the Son of God. ”



NEXT PARENT INFO SESSION:
Wednesday, November 15 - 7 pm
Sacred Heart in Delta

Building Plans Coming Along

Under the direction of Troy Van Vliet, the building plans for St. John Paul II Academy are proceeding according to plan. St. John Paul II Academy will be on 10 acres of property located at 18230 24th Avenue in Surrey. Architectural designs have been drawn and the Building Team, consisting of Mr. Van Vliet, Mr. DesLauriers and the Architect, Mr. Mark Blackwood, have been visiting a number of Catholic Schools (Vancouver College; Notre Dame; St. Thomas Aquinas; Archbishop Carney) and Public schools (University Hill; Norma Rose Point; Coast Mountain Academy) to take a look and talk about the successes they have encountered with their new buildings, what lessons they have learned or what they would do differently. It has been very interesting and informative. The schools have all been gracious hosts and provided us with all the time we needed to ask questions and see their facilities.

All of these visitations have been done with one thing in mind—to provide the students of St. John Paul II Academy with an excellent all-around facility that will nurture the development of the whole child. God-willing, Phase 1 of the new high school will be ready to be move into by September 2019.

In the meantime, plans are well underway to have the first Grade 8 students—the legacy class—start in modular classrooms on the Star of the Sea parish site in September 2018. We thank Fr. Dion, Pastor of Star of the Sea, and Nicole Regush, Principal of Star of the Sea Elementary school for all of their support and prayers.



School Uniform, Crest and Nickname

Recently, Mr. DesLauriers invited a number of the students who have committed themselves to Grade 8 next September, to meet with him, model the potential new school uniform and talk with him about a variety of things from the school nickname and crest to what the theme should be for the school Yearbook.

They were initially a little awkward and shy but after an icebreaker and a few corny jokes they appeared to be more comfortable and ready to share their opinion openly on a variety of topics associated with the school.

The first order of business was to have them try on a number of different uniform options and to get their candid opinion about the school colours that were chosen for the fitting. I thought the students looked very classy and they all expressed that they liked the colours chosen though navy wasn't quite as popular as it reminded some of them of elementary school. Nevertheless, they were terrific ambassadors of not only St. John Paul II Academy but of their present elementary school. I have included some pictures of the students in the new uniform and would appreciate any feedback you might have.

The students were shown some "mock ups" of the potential school crest and all of them had their favorites. The school crest while unique, needs to also reflect who we are as a Catholic School and to provide some insight into the person of St. John Paul II. I have included the school's Archbishop Representative, Fr. Lawrence Donnelly, into the conversation and he has provided some wonderful insights that I know we will all be proud of when it is all said and done. More information will be provided in the November newsletter.

Finally, we went to lunch together and talked about a number of things including the potential school nickname. While the students and I talked about a number of possibilities of what we liked and what we thought would not be suitable, I informed them that one of their first projects in Grade 8 would be to come up the school nickname. Our original Grade 8 students would take ownership of the school nickname – something they could be proud of for years to come. They appeared excited about the possibilities and, in some small way, very special to be part of this legacy class.

Here is what a few students said about the day:

“ When you took my new fellow students and I to the Uniform Store and then to lunch, I couldn’t have had a better time that day. I also must say that I absolutely love the uniform, and I am very much looking forward to going to high school at St. John Paul II Academy. ”

“ Thank you so much for taking me and my classmates out for lunch and trying on the new St. John Paul II uniforms. It was really nice to meet you and I had so much fun. It was cool trying on the new uniforms and to be the first student of JP II to wear them. At lunch when we saw the blueprints of the new school I really liked them and hope that the school is built soon. ”



“ I had a great time going to the uniform store with my new principal. I loved meeting him because he is so funny and because he made us feel so comfortable. I especially enjoyed talking about our future school; I am very excited for grade 8. ”



Moving forward

Currently we have focused on communicating with those people most immediately affected by this project. In particular, we have spoken with the Pastors, Elementary and Secondary Principals, and parents in the South Surrey area both individually and collectively to let them know we are ‘alive, well, and kicking.’ Our 3 Parent Information sessions attracted over 150 interested parents. They heard from myself, Archbishop Miller, Troy Van Vliet and Dan Moric as we provided updates and some impressive [conceptual drawings](#) and information about St. John Paul II Academy.

This was followed up by an outbound phoning group contacting close to 300 parents who had expressed interest in the new high school by completing our Registration Form. Thus far, we now have over 25 families who have submitted their Enrolment Deposit and close to 50 students who have secured a spot at SJP II Academy when their son or daughter graduates from elementary school. There is a strong sense of urgency to have those families who have expressed a sincere interest and excitement about St. John II Academy, to seriously consider committing financially by submitting your Enrolment deposit sooner rather than later. My hope is that we will have 40 committed families by the end of Nov. and, God – willing, this will continue to grow.

All of these parents had expressed interest in St. John Paul II Academy by completing a Pre-Registration form that can be found on the school’s website: www.sjp2academy.com

If you were not contacted or have interest in having your children attend St. John Paul II Academy feel free to contact the Principal, Mr. Michel DesLauriers: mdeslauriers@cisva.bc.ca or at 604-683-9331.

I am also cognizant of those families who have approached and spoken to me about their inability to afford what we are currently asking for and what they can do to have their sons or daughters attend St. John Paul II Academy. They are equally excited about our new high school and want to know how we can assist them in managing this opportunity. In answering this question, I have always stated and I am committed to our mandate of not denying any one a Catholic education for financial reasons. One of the CISVA strategic priorities is Sustainability – that is to “ensure that Catholic Education is sustainable, accessible, and affordable.” In the ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ section of our website, we have addressed the matter of bursaries for families who will require financial assistance. Having four children of my own, all of whom attended both Catholic elementary and high schools, I understand the sacrifices parents make in order for their children to be in this environment. This is an opportunity I want to see for all those who are sincerely interested in St. John Paul II Academy.



WHY I DECIDED TO SEND MY CHILD TO SJP II ACADEMY?

“ We decided that St. John Paul II Academy is the right secondary school option for our daughter because we feel that it is important to take action and join what will be an enriched community experience, which our daughter will carry throughout her lifetime. Over the past 10 years, we have had the opportunity to be part of the Star of the Sea community, where there have been many conversations of bringing a new Catholic high school to the South Surrey/ White Rock peninsula. When the SJP II Academy project was finally announced in 2017, we were over joyed to know that our daughter would be able to continue to grow the foundation of faith based Catholic education through her high school years. ” - Parent

