

The Lynden LINK

Cornerstone Christian School

~ Chairman Report ~

August 25, 2024 ~ Volume 23, Issue 1

In last year's August Link, I quoted from the CCS Vision and Educational Goals, where it says that "the pursuit of knowledge and the development of talents, with a view to being faithful stewards over creation, is a necessary and worthy endeavor." I focused on the fact that we are "stewards over creation," which implies that we are also stewards over our own learning and development. My point was that we want to instill in our children a desire to progressively take ownership of their education. At the beginning of this school year, it's good to remember that again, but our vision document has more guidance as well. Later on, it states that "knowing the mighty works of God in creation and recreation, our students need to learn that all of reality in the particular subject areas is **coherent and is worth knowing.**" (emphasis mine)

At the beginning of another academic year, we can also remind our children that what we teach at CCS is coherent and worth knowing. God's creation is vast, and it has so many fascinating details to explore and understand. The history of God's redeeming work through time is also incredibly complex, yet interconnected. Knowledge about creation and history comes in different forms and varieties, and not all of those varieties will appear to be equally valuable. But, an understanding of different areas is very important for our children. So, let's keep communicating and demonstrating to them what we read in Proverbs 18:16: "An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge."

At CCS, we have teachers, especially in the lower grades, who cover a wide range of subjects. But, we also have teachers who are more specialized, especially in the higher grades. We value each of them for what they bring to our children's growth in knowledge across different areas. Our teachers make it their mission to communicate excitement and wonder about the world we live in. Under God's blessing, may this effort continue at home and at CCS in this coming year, and may our students grow and thrive under the tutelage of parents and skilled teachers.

Steve Hofford



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Upcoming Dates

Aug. 27: First Day of School
Sept. 2: Labor Day
Sept. 11: Picture Day
Oct. 11: PD Day
Oct. 14: Columbus Day

**Next LINK Submission
Due Date:**

October 16, 2024

For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. Eph. 5:8

~ From the Ed Comm ~

Welcome back to a new school year! We pray that God will bless the students, teachers, staff, Board, and volunteers with a year full of learning, growth, and enjoyment of His creation! May we glorify Him in all we do.

This current school year will bring some changes to the 5th and 6th grade classroom. Being a large class, it was decided that Math and Language Arts will be taught separately. This will be a great advantage for our students, as the class size will be smaller, allowing for better student-teacher connection. The same material will be taught to both grades in Language Arts, allowing for ease in bringing the students together again in a combined class in the future. While this is likely a short term change because of the large class size, we are thankful for this solution that will no doubt benefit the students this year!

A new school year brings new opportunities for Parent Information Evenings. As Ed-Comm, we welcome ideas on topics or speakers from parents; we would love to know what interests you. Please contact any member of the committee to pass on your ideas!

This past year brought some attention to the Library Committee, which falls under the umbrella of the Education Committee. With a new school year starting, and some new families joining the ranks at CCS, we thought it would be a good time to share some information about the Library. Additional information can also be found in the Parent Handbook. The goal of the CCS library is to foster a love for good books and to provide students with opportunities to discover God's world, beauty, and truth through a wide variety of books.

Each elementary class has a scheduled library session weekly, during which a new author, series, or subject is presented, and students may sign out four books for a period of three weeks. There is a self-checkout option for middle and high school students, which we would love to see utilized more often, especially considering the state of the public libraries today. We have lots of books and series for this age group, so parents, please encourage your teens to visit the library during their free time!

The Library operates with a team of volunteer librarians who work to prepare weekly presentations of new books and authors for the students, assist students in checking out books, decorate the library and make it an exciting place to be, review books, and purchase, catalog, prepare, and cover new books. The Library Committee attempts to carefully review all books placed in the library. If you discover

a book with objectionable content, please inform the library staff and outline the reasons for your concerns.

One of our book reviewers shared the following review on a specific series we have in our library that we thought would be helpful to share with parents: *"The Wings of Fire series pulls a bait and switch on its young readers – that's when someone pulls you in with the promise of one thing, and then delivers something quite different. The opening 5-book series promised action, with fire, fights, and fast-paced adventure. But starting in book 10 with a one-line mention of one girl dragon liking another girl dragon, it started pushing the LGBT agenda. That came out in a bigger way in books 14 and 15, with the introduction of the non-binary characters Axoloti and Sage (complete with they/them pronouns), Blue's two moms Silverspot and Burnett, lesbian couples Sundew and Willow, and Tamarin and Anemone, and Snowflake and Snowfox, and the homosexual pairings of Jambu and Pineapple. The series works in three 5 book story-arcs, so it is not recommended to get books 11-13 and then stop as the story line will not be finished. So we have the first nine books in the library, but would not encourage you to go looking for the rest."*

As a Library Committee, we are always looking for new, quality books (whether old classic favorites or exciting new books you have come across) to be added to our collection, so students and parents are always welcome to pass on suggestions to the librarians to be added to our wishlist. We welcome you to come visit the library on a Wednesday and see the fun in action!

For the Education Committee,
Rianne Kruyswijk



~ From the Treasurer ~

Welcome to another school year. I am sure everyone is excited to see the warm days of summer move on and some consistency fall into our lives again :).

A big thank you to the society for answering the call for the pledge drive to cover the deficit for the 2024/25 budget year. The deficit amount we needed to cover was \$73,115. Society has pledged around \$105,000. Thanks again to everyone for contributing, what an amazing gift we have been

given! We can see the Lord's work in the finances of our school and be very thankful to him for providing. Again, we can look back at the many years that we have been provided for and be assured that He will continue to hold us up.

Closing out the 2023/24 has been done as well. All pledges were received and applied in a timely manner for that year as well. Thanks for your help with this.

Kolin Veldman

~ Ladies Aid Report ~

Hello from Ladies Aid! Just like that a new school year is upon us. We hope you all had an enjoyable summer break!

The Cornerstone Café has wrapped up for another year. A big thank you to the committee for undertaking the organization of this large event! Thank you also to the many other volunteers who helped in countless ways! Leftover food from the fair is available to purchase in the CCS kitchen/freezer.

We are really looking for a few more ladies to join the Apple Pie Committee. We would love to get this committee filled since planning for it begins soon! Please consider if you are able to help out and contact Bea K. to sign up.

The pumpkin patch has a great variety of pumpkins getting larger every day! Keep your eyes and ears open for your opportunity to help with this fundraiser in the next few months.

Please save the date for the fall Ladies Aid Membership meeting on Sept 17. We are looking for 2 new board members for the positions of Vice President and Treasurer. Please contact one of the current board members if you are able to help in this way!

We are looking forward to another successful year of fundraising. May God bless the efforts of the work we do in the coming year!

~ From the IT Committee ~

There was a flurry of activity at the school over the weekend, which continued this week as the teachers moved into their newly-cleaned classrooms. With the bulk of the furniture back in place, the IT committee was on site Monday evening to do some pre-planned work. We were also presented with a list of action items identified by the staff on their first day back on site. Thank you for the detailed notes, Debbie & Co! As most of our readers are aware there was quite a bit of room swapping since last year to accommodate class sizes, which brought a few additional considerations into play.

At the end of last year (a 2023/2024 budget item) a few replacement computers were purchased (the operating system on some of the older machines is being phased out by Microsoft). We were planning on using those mostly for new staff, but as a welcome back surprise there were a couple other com-

puters that refused to start up for the teachers. So we will be ordering a few more computers as soon as possible. It is our practice to replace machines on a rotating basis, so some new computers for this year were already in the plan-we'll just get started a little sooner.

As a regular yearly "rollover" process we also got all the new students set up with emails and access, as well as making sure that our teachers, current and new, have all of the access they need.

As we do every year, we appreciate the patience of the staff as we try to get (almost) everything up and running for the first day of school.

For the IT Committee,
Ian Davis

~ Cornerstone Foundation ~

Things have been quiet on the Cornerstone Foundation Board over the past several months. We will be meeting again soon to resume our strategic work for the school's benefit.

My apologies for the brief and imprecise numbers contained below, but I realized quite late in the game that this LINK update was due from me, so I was not in time to gather updated bank account figures from our diligent bookkeeper. But if memory serves correct, there is just above a combined \$155,000 in our checking/money market/CD accounts.

Now, for an update on our investment activity: We are continuing with our plan of slowly moving out of our Money Market account into the Ameriprise investment account. We now have transferred a cumulative total of \$100,000 from bank accounts to this investment account. As of writing the current

balance with Ameriprise is close to \$113,000.

This means that the combined assets that have been contributed to the Foundation since its inception, plus the aggregate total of interest and gains we have experienced come out to nearly \$270,000. That is certainly something! As endowment funds go, this is still a modest beginning, but we recognize this is a long-term enterprise, with the intent to benefit future generations of Cornerstone families. We pray for God's continued blessing on the school, as well as the Board's work with this supporting entity.

As always, if you have any question about the CF Board's work or need information on how to donate to the endowment fund, please do not hesitate to reach out to any one of the board members.

For the Cornerstone Foundation Board,
Ian Davis

~ From the CBM Committee ~

Hello all! The CBM would like to extend thanks to all who assisted in moving furniture in, then out and finally back into the classrooms this year. Thanks also to those cleaning the school and getting it that much more ready for our students soon! We appreciate the church allowing the Kindergarten class to meet for a brief time in one of their rooms. We all think it will be a great place for the little ones. With the move back into place and getting ready for the new year, there is always minor fixes that need to happen. Thankfully nothing serious just yet. We are

also in touch with the building committee and getting things sorted in that arena. All in all it was a wonderful summer and we look forward to taking care of the school in this next year.



~ From the Building Committee ~

As you all may have seen by now, our building project is well underway. Dirt has been moved, Dust has blown, footings are in, backfill is done, plumbing is going in and we are arranging for the pad to be poured in the next couple weeks. Thanks so much to the work crews that have answered the call and come out to help. Many hours have already been put in. It's amazing to see the amount of work that can get done when many hands contribute! We want to spread these hours out through the membership and give everyone the opportunity to help. Please respond to Marty Vreugdenhil when he calls and take your turn. Next phase is the framing. It will be exciting to see this project come out of the ground and start looking like a school building.

We have buttoned up and secured the construction site. The only entrance is at the south end through the south property, this is where all construction traffic will be directed. The students can still access all the way around the south side of the school to their classrooms at the back. Please talk with your kids (boys) and prep them that there is an active construction site at the school and not let their curiosity get the best of them.

Thanks so much

The building committee, Clarence Kobes, Marty Vreugdenhil, Ben Faber, Kolin Veldman, Raymond Faber, Brian Hendricks

~ From the Principal ~

The weeks of summer break fly by quickly, but are very important for the refreshment of the staff. For the first few weeks of the summer break the teachers and support staff all can attest to the change that takes place as the intensity and stress of the school year are eased. From your perspective on the home front, you must also notice the difference as adjustments are made to non-scheduled days and a more relaxed mode. It takes a while to adjust. And then the calendar turns to August. I think most teachers notice the change that takes place when the calendar reads August, as suddenly thoughts of school and planning for the new year infiltrate our day. While the days still have a relaxed feel, the work has begun. The relaxed days of summer truly refresh teachers so that we are able to come back to school with excitement, enthusiasm for the work, and the energy to complete it. There may be many weeks of summer, but they are put to good use!

SCHOOL THEME

“Walk as children of light” from Ephesians 5:8 will be the school theme for the school year. As the staff discussed what to choose as our theme, we turned to an article we discussed titled, “Enmity Matters, or How to Make Woke Christians”. This article was written by John Wynia, the League coordinator working for the Canadian Reformed Schools in Ontario. Did it shock you to see the adjective “Woke” in connection with the noun Christians? What sort of Christian is a ‘woke’ christian? Wynia reminds us that we all need to be woke, for as Ephesians 5:14 says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you”, or read what Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5: 4-8. So, Scripture shows us we need to be awake, though admittedly not with the same understanding of ‘woke’ that the world uses. As we talked about this article, we saw an opportunity to connect this to a school theme as well.

Allow me to share a few other treasures we gleaned from Wynia’s writing. While we don’t want our students to withdraw from the world, or to alienate themselves from it, it remains important to ‘give them an antithetical perspective’ as God is the author of the antithesis. We also need to equip our students with the ability ‘to discern truth from error’. To quote John Wynia “*The Reformed school aims to equip students to practice discernment by firmly grounding them in the truths of God’s Word, by showing them the wonder of His handiwork in creation and His power and sovereignty in providence. It also assists students by exposing them to Satan’s lies through guided confrontations.*” So, in other words, the teachers’ task is to give Biblical instruction so that the students grow in their under-

standing of what it means to live as “Children of light”. Our students must be engaging faithfully in their world. We have a cultural mandate given to us. We have a task in this world, and it consists of more than only a healthy prayer life and faithful church attendance. We are called to demonstrate our Christian walk in all that we are busy with, whether on the farm, in the office, at our homes, or in the context of CCS, in the school. What does it mean to be a Christian student, as opposed to a student who attends a Christian school?

As the school year progresses we hope to unpack this further and discuss this with our students and see how Scripture gives guidance for walking as ‘children of Light’.

WELCOME!

Every school year we have the privilege of welcoming some new students and families. Our first grade has four families sending their oldest child to Cornerstone, making this a first for the whole family. Corbin Heeringa, Jude Vande Hoef, Zander Wendt, and Jack Wielenga will be joined by Lilly Brown, Reagan Burger, Jacob Chase, Bridget DeMooy, Piper Faber, Myles Hofford, Branton VanDelft, Avery Veldman, and Drew Visser to complete the first grade class. In 7th grade Jude’s sister Peyton is joining the class. Jessica Kingma will become a member of our freshman class, while Brandon Grim will add to the numbers of our junior class. We are excited to welcome all of these new faces to our Cornerstone family.

We also have some new staff to note. Mrs. Kooiman, while still adjusting to her new name for the last 7 weeks or so, will also be adjusting to being the classroom teacher of 31 students! Thankfully she is sharing the load for Math and Language. While she instructs students in the joys of reading and writing and all that goes along with that, Mr. Matt Phair will be giving guidance to the students for their math skills. Fifth and sixth grade will be split for Language and Math this current year. Other changes in the staffing roster will be the re-appearance of Mrs. Ranelle Faber, who will be working in the 1/2 classroom for the whole day on Fridays, and Mrs. Bea Sterk, who will be teaching Art 3/4 on Wednesday afternoons, as well as working as a para-educator on Friday mornings. It is such a blessing to have a full complement of staff once again, knowing that we have a great team ready to take on their tasks for the new year.

THINGS TO NOTE:

- Miss Jeanette Janssen is already busy with her vice-principal role. High school matters will be her main focus. I'm very thankful that she was found willing to take on this role, and that Cornerstone was able to make the principal role a team effort. It is sure to benefit the school.

- Cell Phone: Please remember that your child should NOT be accessing their phone during the school day. If you need to forward a message, please feel free to email the teacher and it will be passed along, or expect your child(ren) to receive the message at the end of the day. Phones should be kept in the lockers or their cars during the day. Phones have a negative impact on student learning and social interaction, due to their addictive nature and distractibility. Except for a rare occasion when the teacher requests it of the student, there is no need for a phone in the classroom.

- Drop Off/Pick up Protocol. When at the front of the school, please pull as far forward as you can, even following the curve somewhat. Friend-visiting-arranging should not be done while in the pick up line. We appreciate your help with this. We want to avoid having cars lined up on Northwood Road. We do our best to keep the line moving.

- Allergy: We will remain NUT-AWARE this year, with special attention to cashew and pistachio. Outside of the 1/2 classroom these nuts are permitted, but should remain out of the hallways and handwashing is important after eating these nuts.

- For school safety it should be noted that the high school foyer doors will be locked after 8:15. All students arriving after that time will have to enter by the front door. Students coming in after 10:30 (when Mrs. VanDiest has gone

home) will be asked to sign in using the form on the counter.

- Finally, a reminder regarding absences. For a single day absence, for any reason, please remember to send an email to absent@cornerstoneschool.us. It is not okay to simply let one classroom teacher know. There are a variety of teachers that teach each class and it is important for the school to know who is present and who is not. For long absences, like a family vacation, we would appreciate a note at least a week in advance. Teachers may choose to share some homework in advance, but are not required to do so. Onus on catching up remains with the student first. An absence for driver training will not count as a medical appointment, and will affect a student's ability to play sports that day.

- Non-CCS Sport participation: If your child will be participating in a sport outside of CCS teams, please let me know.

- If you have concerns or questions about something that took place at the school, please reach out. We'd rather not hear about something via conversations with others. If it is a problem, we would prefer to address it and make it better. Or maybe a simple clarification will take care of it. If it is something with a teacher, it is best to start with them, but as principal, my office and ears are always ready to receive your concerns.

It has been a busy week getting everything ready! Considering the dramatic change the hallways and classrooms underwent this week, going from "What a mess!" to "Come in students. We are ready for you!" it is clear to see that a lot of work went into this transition. With the help of the members on various committees (CBM and IT have been amazing this week!) and a community of volunteers, the school looks amazing and ready. With God's blessing may the 2024-2025 school year be a successful one, with clear evidence that we are those



2024/2025 School Calendar

August

27- First Day of School

September

2- Labor Day

11- Student Picture Day

October

11- PD Day

14- Columbus Day

November

7- HS 1st Qtr report Cards

8 - PD Day

11- Veteran's Day

12,13 - High School P/T Conferences

27- Elem Report Cards Term 1

28- Thanksgiving Day

29- Thanksgiving Break

December

2 & 4- Elem P/T Conferences

20- Last Day of 2024

23-Jan 3 – Christmas Break

January

6- First Day of 2025

20- Martin Luther King Day

24- HS 2nd Qtr Reports

27 & 28- HS P/T Conferences

February

14- PD Day

17- President's Day

27& 28- Mid Winter Break

March

13- Elem Report Cards Term 2

14- PD Day

17 & 19- Elem P/T Conferences

31- April 4- Spring Break

April

11- HS 3rd Qtr Reports

17- Grandparents Day

17- Easter Concert

18- Good Friday

May

9- PD Day

23- Sports Day

26- Memorial Day

27- Sports Day Backup

30- Eighth Grade Graduation

June

6- Last Day of School

6- Senior Graduation

9-11- Teacher Work Days

11 - Report Card Distribution

Board

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Chairman: | Steve Hofford |
| Vice-Chairman: | Jan Kottelenberg |
| Secretary: | Stephanie Bareman |
| Treasurer: | Kolin Veldman |
| Ed Comm Liaison: | Stephanie Bareman |
| Staff & Membership Admin | Jan Kottelenberg |
| Building Liaison: | Harvey Pelleboer |
| IT Liaison: | Dave Hofford |

Building/Maintenance Committee

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|------------------|----------------|
| Joshua Burger | Andrew DeMooy |
| Rick DeMooy | Jon Kruyswijk |
| Harvey Pelleboer | Terry VanDiest |

Education Committee

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Debbie Johnson | Janice DeMooy |
| Jeanette Janssen | Jon Dykstra |
| Rianne Kruyswijk | Ryan VanDriel |
| Stephanie Bareman | |

IT Committee

| | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Caleb Bareman | Ian Davis |
| Dave Hofford | Dustin Wielenga |

Finance Committee

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|-----------------|------------------|
| Brian Hendricks | Harvey Pelleboer |
| Kolin Veldman | Gavin Willis |

Athletic Committee

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|------------------|---------------|
| Katrina Lodder | Stephen Chase |
| Harvey Pelleboer | Kolin Veldman |
| Gavin Willis | |

Ladies Aid Committee

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|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Pres - Bea Kleyn | VP - Malorie Burger |
| Sec - Jessica Chase | Treas -Jolene Vreugdenhil |

Staff

Office Administration:

Debbie Johnson - Principal
Kari VanDiest- Secretary
Karla Leyenhorst - Bookkeeper

Full Time:

Debbie Johnson - Art 5-10
Jeanette Janssen -Science 7-12, Math 9-12, Comp-Program 10
Jolene Groves— PE, Bible, Hist. 3/4, L.A., Math 3, Science
Paige Kooiman - Gr. 5/6
Stephen Chase - PE 5-8, HS Eng & Hist, His. 7-8, Per Fin 9
Stephen Houweling - Math 4, Gr.7/8, Comp Progr. 9
Wayne Chase - HS: Bible, Math, English, History

Part Time:

Bea Sterk - Art 3/4
Christine Hofford - Ed Support
Hannah Gonzalez - Spanish 11/12, Gr. 1/2- PE & Science
Janice Dykstra - Ed Support Director
Jolene Vreugdenhil - Culinary Arts 11/12
Julie Thompson - Ed Support
Kathleen Stevens— Yearbook, L.A 4
Katrina Lodder - Athletic Director, Ed Support
Kaylene Hofford - Ed Support
Kristina Wendt - PE 11
Matt Phair - Gr.5/6 Math
Melanie Kottelenberg - Music 3-6
Ranelle Faber - Gr.1/2 Friday
Shari Kruyswijk - Gr.1/2 Bible, Math, Music, Art, History
Sharon Veldman - Culinary Arts 11/12
Tessa Kooiker - L.A. 1/2