

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Calgary Society for Christian Education
Annual General Meeting
MAY 16, 2017

As my term as a Board member, and Board Chair, comes to an end it's been nice to reflect on the past three years. Being a Board member has been a very worthwhile experience! You might expect that Board work is more operational in nature, but with a solid group of Society staff and volunteers, the Board is far more focused on the Governance of the Society. One key part of this Governance piece includes growing and maintaining our relationship with Palliser.

We've been very fortunate to maintain ongoing discussions that have resulted in a positive relationship with Palliser. During my tenure, these discussions have included revisions to our Master Agreement, clarity on funding, working jointly on a Safe & Caring School policy, cooperatively hiring two new principal's, and allowing us to provide additional staffing support to the school. Specifically, the Society has had the opportunity to fund a Literacy Instructor as well as Teachers and Educational Assistants. And not to take credit away from the teaching staff, but as a Board we've believed it's important to fund additional support as a means to support educational success. And that success can be seen in the 2016 Accountability Pillars. CCES scored "Excellent" in all 4 categories and CCSS scored "Excellent" in 3 of the 6 categories, including Student Learning Achievements, Safe & Caring Schools, and Parental Involvement. In addition, 83% of our students move on to post-secondary settings following graduation from CCSS. Thinking about Student Learning Achievements, both the 2016 PAT scores for CCES and Diploma scores for CCSS were higher than the previous year, higher than the 3 year average, and significantly higher than the Alberta averages. Those scores are a direct result of our Teachers, Support Staff and involved Parents helping to ensure Academic Excellence at CCS!

One area that we need to "do better" as a Board/Society is communicating our story. Not only as it relates to academic success, but also in liaising with the Society as a whole. Our new Strategic Plan specifically addresses this. But we also desire to hear more directly from Society members. We receive very little formal feedback from Society members, and in some cases, the way and tone in which that feedback has been provided has left Society staff feeling devalued. This isn't always the case, but I would encourage you as Society members, to be gracious in your interactions. I can't promise that future Boards or future Society staff will do everything perfectly, but they will be well-intentioned in their actions. If you ever have questions or concerns, you shouldn't hesitate to speak with Ken directly or email the Board at board@calgarychristianschool.com

Lastly, the Board is on the front end of implementing a new 5 year Strategic Plan. This will be very important work for the Board moving forward. It will help shape the direction for our future identify (including the communication of that identify), future facility growth, and financial security. You'll hear more about the Strategic Plan at the AGM.

Finally, I want to thank the Society for providing me the opportunity to serve as a Board member these past 3 years. It's been a really great experience, and I can honestly say that I have a greater appreciation and respect for our Society, Society Staff, Teachers and Students as a result of my time on the Board. I'm excited to see what God has in store for CSCE in the future!

Darren Milne, Chair

Principal's Report for Calgary Christian Secondary School

My first report to the Board in September included these concepts:

- Engaging initial conversations with teachers on what they perceive as our “Why?”
- Understanding that our enrollment drain is statistically linked to HS transition, but that addressing it will be a multi-faceted, integrated approach that begins with a focused “Why” commitment
- The #1 response from staff regarding what is awesome at our school has been our inter-connectedness and commitment to each other in our learning community

What happened over the year on those ideas?

- We have agreed that the school staff, society staff, and parent stakeholders need an integrated vision building process, which is being planned for the upcoming year
- Commitments and planning are underway for expanding community building experiences to each grade (eg - Frontier Lodge for gr 12)
- We experienced the support needed for colleagues who required medical leaves, bereavement support, and integrating new colleagues who served in the place of those on leave - so our community strength has been confirmed

Significant Events

We have a great spectrum of student experiences that promote growth, service, learning, and character development:

- A full slate of academic and elective courses, taught by colleagues who care about their students' success and learning as whole persons
- Arts - Band & Choral Concerts, Drama production
- Athletic ventures for teams and individuals in extracurricular events
- Service opportunities in our local community, through events like the Marit Cup, the Belize trip, and through our many Senior and Passion Projects

We engaged our community in multiple events and means such as student and parent SpeakOuts, surveys, and smaller groupings to provide opportunities to guide our improvement initiatives

Moving Forward

I believe strongly that offering a forum for students and parents to provide input will only be seen as valuable if we are able to demonstrate that we listened and are implementing some of those ideas. (Actions speak louder than words)

EG. both students and parents expressed ideas around creating greater value in Faith Formation experiences. We are planning improvements in Bible curriculum and instruction, in PA and Chapel frameworks, and in community building to directly address and respond to those concerns

Adjusting our timetable to complement those improvements - EG. revised PA time

Thank you for your support and input as I have learned a new role, begun to forge new relationships, and partnered with you for your student's learning.

Spring 2017 CSCE AGM

Calgary Christian School - Elementary

We had numerous Admissions meetings in January, February and March, and our enrollment for next year is at about 462 at this point. So there will be a couple more Admissions meetings, as there are waiting lists at every grade level. Our goals for class sizes are 20 in Kindergarten and Grade One, 21 in Grade Two, 22 in Grade Three, and 24 in Grades Four, Five and Six. We added a term LLI (Leveled Literacy Intervention) position in January, which is working very well. We have also purchased hundreds of new leveled texts, so that when ready, there will be 17 titles at each of the levels from A - M. These are in the process of being mac-taced so as to extend their lives, and when all done will be added to our literacy lab (in the Division 2 Resource Room).

The months from January to June in particular have seen not only ongoing field trips, but also a variety of enrichment activities in the area of PE and the Fine Arts. Students have gone skating at the nearby rink, skiing at Canada Olympic Park, had instructors come in for a week to lead dance lessons as part of our PE classes, and just recently an Artist-in-the-School residency where an Artist led the children in a particular painting technique. Some of you might have seen the cards that were produced as a result. We also had an Artist in for our grade 5's to lead them in sketching. This variety is evidence of an extensive enrichment program here at CCES, for which I am truly grateful. Some of these activities are financed by things as mundane as pizza and hot dog days, so I want to encourage you to keep signing up the students for these hot lunches (!), as they very directly enable truly impressive enrichment activities for our kids.

With regard to next year, we have talked with Pastor Layne and in conjunction with him will be piloting a new Bible program (based on the book Telling God's Story: A Parent's Guide to Teaching the Bible) in three classes, with Ms. Visser in Grade Four, Mr. Bird in Grade Three, and Mrs. Ermter in Grade One. The benefits of piloting a program are that the inevitable implementation hurdles and surprises are limited in their scope and effect, with the result that the following year when the implementation is expanded (all grade 1-4 classes), the process, to a large extent, occurs smoothly, since the three pilot teachers function as resources for the rest of the teaching staff.

I mentioned that the school has an excellent schedule of field trips and enrichment activities. For next year we have an added bonus. The Open Minds program is a Learning Beyond the Classroom experience for various grade levels in schools across Calgary. For one week during the school year classes get to go to various sites across the city, for Science School, University School, Zoo School, Aerospace School, City Hall School, etc. We applied to this program for next year, and were accepted! There were more than two times the number of applicants than

there were openings, so we count ourselves fortunate. We will be the first Palliser School to be part of the program. Our classes have been accepted to City Hall School; in fact, they requested our school. The cost for this program is \$1500 per class, which includes the busing to and from City Hall for each of the five days. To reduce the cost, we will be eliminating some of the existing field trips, which, due to the elimination of busing, reduces our costs. But we will be asking parents of grade 6 students to contribute to cover the remainder of this incredible opportunity which will, at best, only come along every so often, simply because the goal of the program is to allow as many schools as possible to participate. The link for City Hall School, and some info from the website is below:

<http://cbe.ab.ca/ccom/Pages/City-Hall-School.aspx>

Citizenship and municipal governance come alive at City Hall School. A wealth of opportunities exist for students to learn and become informed and civically engaged citizens within the Municipal Building and in our Centre City communities. Working alongside City of Calgary employees and meeting with Council members provide authentic experiences to learn more about City of Calgary services, municipal governance and what it means to be a Calgarian.

I have almost 9 months under my belt of a year in the life of CCES. So I now have a context and understanding of pretty much the landscape of a year, which is great. Once again, I am grateful to be at CCES, and blessed to be part of a very capable staff.

Mike Thiesen
Elementary Principal