

Sturgis Charter Public School



An International Baccalaureate Diploma School

Executive Director's Newsletter

January 25, 2008

Dear Parents,

We provide parents with this Newsletter as a means of helping you become better informed about events and activities at Sturgis. We hope that this type of communication is helpful. Communication, of course, is a two way street. Please do not hesitate in calling us if you have a question or concern.

Dates of Professional Half Days Changed: Due to the availability of consultants, we have changed the dates of our Professional Half Days. The half day of February 1 has been changed to February 8, and the half day scheduled for April 4 has been changed to March 28. Students will be dismissed at 11:45 a.m. on February 8 and March 28.

Yearbook: January is the last month to order yearbooks. The cost is now \$45 and must be paid in order to reserve.

Auction News from SPA: It's time to turn in the donations! The February 4th donation deadline is fast approaching but we are way behind last year's tally. For the Auction to be a success, we need everyone's help! To inspire you, the SPA Auction Committee is sponsoring a contest for the largest number of donations collected: 1st prize is \$100, 2nd prize is \$75. To qualify, donations should be new items, services or gift certificates and must be turned in by the deadline of Feb. 4th. Additional donation slips and business letters can be picked up at the Sturgis main office (508-778-1782) or mailed home if needed. If you have already collected Auction items, please have your student drop them off at the main office. You can also purchase an item or gift certificate to donate and consider what services your family may be able to offer (e.g. yard work, entertainment, culinary skills etc.). If you want to help but don't know what to do or what businesses to visit, email Cindi Griffin at ccgriffin@comcast.net for suggestions. Thanks again to all the students, families and Sturgis staff who have been out there collecting items for the Auction. We appreciate your efforts and look forward to seeing you at the Auction on March 9th!

GUIDANCE UPDATE: Financial Aid deadlines and priority dates are quickly approaching. Many colleges have priority dates in February and March but no firm deadline for applying for financial aid. We urge families and students to apply by the priority date – the date by which the college needs the application in order to award the most attractive aid package. After this date, funds may be limited or depleted, and students may not get as much aid as they need. Links to the financial aid websites for the FAFSA and CSS/PROFILE are on the Sturgis Guidance website.

Local scholarships are posted on the Naviance website. Students and parents can access the list, which includes more than twenty local scholarship postings. We continue to post local

scholarships as we receive them, so we encourage checking the site on a weekly or biweekly basis.

Standing Room Only at Information Sessions for 2008-09! We have hosted huge crowds (a 50% increase over the last year) during the first two Information Sessions for parents and students interested in applying for enrollment in grades 9 & 10 for the 2008-09 school year. The deadline for applications in the first enrollment period is Friday, January 11.

Cape Cod Five Grants: Congratulations to Sam Patterson and Marsha Yalden for submitting winning grant proposals to the Cape Cod Five Cents Bank Charitable Foundation Trust Mini-Grant competition. Sam's grant was for \$400 to support web camera data gathering and analysis, and Marsha's grant was to support a theater tool box and set construction materials.

More Schools Visiting Sturgis: Board members from the Global Learning Charter Public School in New Bedford visited Sturgis last week to explore best practices for board governance. In addition, five teachers and administrators from the International School of Beaverton, OR will be visiting Sturgis in March to explore the implementation of an "IB for All" program based on the Sturgis model.

Community Service Visit to Honduras: Our annual community service visit to the American School of Tegucigalpa, Honduras is planned for February 16-24. Further information about the trip will be available next week. Students and parents can contact Eric Hieser for information.

Yearbooks on Sale: The Yearbooks are on sale until the Winter Break for \$40. After that, they will cost \$45. We need to let the yearbook company know the exact number that we are ordering, so if you want a yearbook, please make your purchase ASAP. If you are a parent of a senior and want to put an ad in for your student, you must do so before the winter break.

News from the Music Dept: Eleven students were accepted into the All Cape & Islands Music Festival: 9 singers, 1 flautist, and 1 bassoonist. Six students were accepted into the very competitive Southeast District Music Festival: 5 singers and 1 flautist. That was a huge improvement over last year's one accepted student!

A group of 5 students performed and were well received at the Arts Foundation of Cape Cod's recent grant reception using the djembes (African hand drums) that were purchased with the grant received last year.

Seventeen students braved the cold rain on Friday, Dec. 7th to bring holiday cheer while caroling to businesses and patrons around Main St. during the Hyannis Holiday Stroll. This was our best turnout yet!

The Chorus, Sturgis Strings, Sturgis Singers, and newly formed Jazz Band as well as various soloists and small group ensembles worked very hard to put together this year's Winter Concert. The Chorus, Strings, and Jazz Band are accepting new members for the second half of the year! Due to the weather, we will need to reschedule the concert for an evening during the week of December 17. When the date is chosen, it will be announced via email and the Sturgis website.

Ms. Sitarz's advisory group will be going on their second "service singing" expedition to Thirwood Place retirement homes bringing holiday cheer to the residents.

Guidance Update: PSAT score reports are in. Guidance counselors will be returning and reviewing score reports during classroom visits in early January. Students raved about the fall Sturgis college visit field trip and requested a spring college trip. Planning is underway for a spring field trip to Boston and we will provide details at a later date. Juniors are reminded to register for the SAT or the ACT during the spring semester. February and April school vacations are a great time to begin college visits. We will encourage students to plan some college visits and tours this spring when we visit classrooms in early January.

IB News: *ToK* students in the Diploma Program have been given their final Theory of Knowledge Questions. They are responsible for writing 1200-1600 words on one question and must submit it to the IBO by the end of term. Possible topics include:

- * Are some ways of knowing more likely than others to lead to truth?
- * "Context is all" (Margaret Atwood). Does this mean that there is no such thing as truth?
- * Our senses tell us that a table, for example, is a solid object; science tells us that the table is mostly empty space. Thus two sources of knowledge generate conflicting results. Can we reconcile such conflicts?

IB English

All senior English students are currently preparing for their Oral Commentaries. In early January, students will be asked to analyze a piece of literature or poetry. The session is taped and sent off to the IBO. It is these types of assessments that set the IB and Sturgis apart from the rest!

Alumni Reunion: We will be holding our annual Alumni Reunion on Friday, December 21 from 10:00-12:30. The schedule for the reunion includes coffee and chatting with old friends at 10:00 a.m. at Sturgis, and sharing thoughts about college and beyond with the Sturgis seniors at 11:00 a.m. at the Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. We look forward to catching up with our Sturgis alums.

If you would like further information about any of the events or activities described above, please call the Sturgis school office.

Eric Hieser
Executive Director