

Sturgis Charter Public School



An International Baccalaureate Diploma School

Executive Director's Newsletter

January 23, 2009

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.

Applications Increase by 27% for 2009-10: Sturgis held the enrollment lottery last week for places in grade 9 for the 2009-10 school year. We had 229 applications for 100 places in grade 9, a 27% increase over the previous year. Applications from siblings also increased significantly from 25 to 41, a 64% increase. The popularity of the IB and Sturgis seems to continue its rise across southeastern MA. In addition, we now have 47 students on the waiting list for grade 10 next year.

New Art Room: The Fine Arts Department is thrilled to begin second semester with the opening of the new Visual Arts Center at 20 Pearl Street. Sturgis is leasing the gallery space for all visual art classes. Theatre classes have moved into room 110 (the old visual arts classroom). Most significantly, this recent move has breathed fresh inspiration into the students and teachers alike. In addition, more classroom space has been created within our building. If you get the chance, please stop by and check out the new art and theatre classrooms.

IB News: January marks the beginning of significant Internal Assessments for the Class of 2009. Just after vacation, one could observe the Standard Level English students braving the cold winds on Main Street to participate in their Oral Commentaries at the Baptist Church. Students had to select one envelope on a table out of ten possible choices. Inside was a portion of a text that the student had studied during their last two years at Sturgis. After twenty minutes of quiet contemplation, the student was asked to analyze the piece in the form of a literary criticism. The commentary was taped and will be sent overseas shortly to be formally assessed by the International Baccalaureate. The Higher Level English students are currently undertaking the same exercise. This type of rigorous assessment is what separates the Sturgis senior experience from other schools on the Cape. The students and their teachers deserve recognition for their efforts over the past two weeks.

Senior Full Diploma candidates have recently finished the Theory of Knowledge (ToK) course. For their final paper, these students had to select a question from the I.B. and answer it in 1,600 words. Sample questions include:

- "In expanding the field of knowledge we but increase the horizon of ignorance (Henry Miller). Is this true?"

- To understand something you need to rely on your own experience and culture. Does this mean that it is impossible to have objective knowledge?
- "Seek simplicity, and distrust it" (Alfred North Whitehead). Is this always good advice?

To answer these questions thoughtfully requires organization, insight and a willingness to divulge one's own limitations and biases. The Sturgis ToK students should be commended for the dedication put forth in answering these questions. They are also rewarded with a study hall for the second semester, which may be the reason for the extra bounce in their step as they walk through the halls of Sturgis.

Yearbook: LAST CHANCE to purchase a Yearbook!! We must place our order at the end of this month. If your student wants to have a yearbook, please bring \$40 cash or check to the main office or order online at jostensyearbooks.com.

Auction Update: The Auction Committee is making steady progress and working hard to assure a fun and successful event. Enclosed in this mailing you will find our "Save the Date" flyer, which boasts our new collaboratively designed logo and slogan.

We have begun receiving donations, but we need many more! Please continue to solicit items and turn them into Rachel Todoroff as early as possible. Only with much parent participation will this event be a success. The auction will be catered by the Hospitality Committee, so we will not be asking you to bring potluck. Instead, we ask that you concentrate all of your efforts on getting donations.

Hint - It has been called to our attention that business owners find it much harder to say no to a student than to a parent. For more tips on where and how to solicit, please see Penny's auction tips on the SPA website. We will be posting the names of all businesses who donate and we encourage our Sturgis families to support these businesses that are supporting us.

We would love to have a few parents, students, or teachers give a testimonial during the auction about the importance of Sturgis in their lives. If you are interested, please submit a brief (1-3 minute) testimonial in writing by February 15th to Krsana Henry at krsana@comcast.net. Please include your name, contact information (including email and phone number), and let us know whether you are a parent, student, or teacher.

Finally, we are presently seeking any and all low cost and/or free advertising opportunities that may increase the interest and attendance at our auction. If you have any ideas or connections, please contact Krsana as soon as possible at krsana@comcast.net or by calling 774-238-6565.

We appreciate your support and are looking forward to seeing you all on March 29!

Science Department News: We welcome Sue Hutchinson as a new grade 9 Biology teacher to replace Mrs. Kehoe while she is on leave. Dr. Gilligan, an experienced IB teacher, has graciously taken on the senior IB Biology classes to make sure they are on target for their IB exams and internal assessments. We are very fortunate to have such a talented and dedicated team and look forward to Mrs. Kehoe's return next fall. Also, we are grateful to the Cape Cod Foundation which awarded us approximately \$500 for group 4 sampling equipment.

Prom: The prom committee is selling tickets to their Outback Luncheon fund raiser which will be held on Saturday, February 7th from 11:30 - 1:30. Their goal is to sell 200 tickets. The ticket includes appetizer, a choice from 4 tasty lunch selections, dessert, and your beverage. Entertainment will be provided by Sturgis students. There will be door prizes and some wonderful raffle items, including among other things, a signed and numbered print of a painting by one of our esteemed art teachers, Peter Richenburg, and a lovely quilted valentine table runner hand crafted by Diane Klaiber, one of our very helpful librarians. If you have not purchased your tickets yet, please do so as soon as possible and before January 30th. Prices are \$15 for adults, \$12 for students, and \$7 for children 8 and under. Tickets will be on sale at school from Mrs. Hyer and during lunch from prom committee members. With your support, this event will be the highlight of the prom committees' fund raising events for 2009.

Geometry News: "Engineering design" project in geometry? For extra credit in Geometry, students can build a device (the algorithm came from a math 9 student, Zack Grosslein) to find the center of a circle. They will build 2 isosceles right triangles, bisected by a long wand. This project gives "hands on" students the chance to shine, to get extra credit, and to think about constructing useful things - a skill that will be helpful some day in the working world.

Honduras Community Service Trip: Nine students and Spanish teacher, Jenn Kirk, will be traveling to Honduras to stay with students who attend our School to School Partner, the American School of Tegucigalpa, from February 21-28. The students will be participating in the Operation Smile program in addition to visiting the ancient Mayan ruins in Copan and also seeing sites around Tegucigalpa.

Quebec Trip: More than 40 students and chaperones will be traveling to Quebec City from February 13-16 for the Quebec Winter Carnival. Students will be seeing the sites of Quebec, practicing their French, and participating in the many activities organized for the Carnival. Thanks go to French teachers Paula O'Keefe and Walter Cichacki for organizing the trip.

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