



# Saint Paul's Academy

## NEWSLETTER



Wednesday, November 26, 2008

Volume 6, Issue 7

North Campus • 3000 Northwest Avenue • 360.733.1750 • South Campus • 2117 Walnut Street • 360.738.3321 Bellingham, WA 98225 • www.sp-academy.org

## Conferences December 2-4

Dear Parents,

**Christmas Boxes for Samaritan's Purse**  
– We had about 130 boxes, which is totally unbelievable! Thank you for taking on this project so enthusiastically.

**St. Paul's Academy at Barnes and Noble** - This event was a great success! Thank you to the LEPS and SPA teachers who came to read, and Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Allen, Mr. Siemion, Mrs. Johnson and the Scarecrow who dressed up as book characters!



**Chess Team Wins Carl Cozier Tournament!** On Saturday, November 15, fifteen SPA students participated in the first annual Carl Cozier Chess Kick-off (amongst 163 players). Our team won first place overall! Individual honors went to: Jason Lowry (first in the second-third grade section); Liam Miszczak, William Howard-Snyder, Colton Carpenter (fifth, sixth and seventh in the fourth-fifth grade section, respectively). These players, along with Peter Howard-Snyder and Asa Danenhower, qualified for the elementary school state championship to be held in April in Spokane.

Grace Pyles, Christopher Pyles, Shion Singleton, Chase Loisel, Max Danenhower, Carson Sygitowicz, Mitu Caron, Abdullah Salam, and Obie Pacheco also participated. It was especially encouraging to see a

number of new players from our school.

**Car Seat Policy** – When students go on field trips in cars, we need to adhere strictly to the car seat laws which is: **“The child must use a car seat or booster seat until 8 years of age or 80 pounds.”** We acknowledge that parents may not require their own child to sit in a booster seat or car seat, but if they are on a school sponsored event, we need to follow the law, unless, the child is riding with his/her own parent. According to our attorney, we need to enforce this. Please send a booster seat or car seat with your child if they are riding with another adult if they are under 80 pounds or 8 years old.

**School Closure During Inclement Weather** - In case of difficult driving conditions, the decision regarding attendance at school rests with the parent or guardian. For students remaining at home during inclement weather, an excused absence will be given.

Regardless of conditions, every attempt will be made to keep the school open and functioning. The policy regarding school closures will be consistent with Bellingham Public Schools, which will be broadcast on radio stations: KAFE 104.3 FM, KGMI 790 AM, KISM 92.9 FM. We also try to have it announced on Channel 4 and 5. Unlike the public school system, however, **we do not delay the beginning of the school day** on inclement days. We will only make up snow days if the number of days in school falls below 180 days. This policy is in your student's agenda if you lose this newsletter!

**How do we improve our instruction at St. Paul's Academy?** I will include some information in every newsletter about this topic for a while.

**Who is helping us improve?** (Survey Questions 29, 4, 5, 22 and 25) Teachers attend workshops every year that meet the goals they write for themselves or that the administrator feels would help them improve their instruction. The school pays for that in-service and the substitute teacher. In addition, SPA teachers meet 4 times a year for the entire day to learn together. The National Association of Accredited Schools (NAAS) is taking us through a school improvement self-study and

their facilitator comes from Olympia to work with us. He will be here again in December.

In addition, we map our curriculum on Rubicon Atlas Curriculum Mapping, a service that assists us with this process. They trained us about two years ago and we are continuing that mapping. Our curriculum is aligned with the Washington State Essential Learnings and Grade Level Expectations; however, our students usually exceed those expectations.

I also have the opportunity to have professionals in the area come in to work with teachers individually. We would like to do more of this because it is so valuable. For example, I might decide that primary teachers need to have more training on how to use Lucy Calkin's instructional methods, so I will hire a consultant to work with a teacher or group of teachers. The consultant acts as a mentor, which is a very effective and positive method to bring about change.

**House League** – For those of you who are new to St. Paul's Academy, students participate in a school-wide program that promotes caring about issues within our school, as well as outreach to those beyond the walls of our school. In addition House League sponsors academic events during the school year.

The school is split into four houses. Each house has mixed age groups. Students earn points for their house by participating in house league sponsored events. The four house at St. Paul's are Ershig, Ferlin, Hess and Kaiser.

The events planned for the year are: canned food-drive in November, Read-A-Thon in January, Pennies for Patients in March and Poetry Month in April.

**Nativity Times and Dates** - Students perform on two different evenings dependent on their class and grade. All performances are at the church! Please mark these dates on your calendars. NOTE: Half of the 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be assigned to each night and will assist with costumes and organization on each evening.

- **Monday, December 15, 6:30PM:** Porter, Jorgensen, Loeffler, Donner, Choir (Erickson, 6th, 7th) and 1/2 of the 8th grade helpers.
- **Tuesday, December 16, 6:30PM:** DeSaulniers, Hewitt, Barton, Loisel, Barnes, Choir (Wagner, Feeney, Buckley, McDonnell, Ferris) and 1/2 of the 8th grade helpers.

**Dates for Conferences : December 2nd, 3 and 4th, 2008 – School dismisses at 11:30AM - Please read below for specifics to elementary and upper**

**schools.** (There is after school care on those days. Please let the YMCA know that you will need care for your child.)

**Grades K-5 Conferences** – Teachers will post sign up lists outside their classrooms for you to schedule your conference. School is dismissed for all students at 11:30AM on those dates and there is after school care.

**Middle and High School conferences - Grades 6-10 – Upper School Conferencing: - 12:15PM to 4:00PM** - The upper school parent/teacher conferences will be organized the same as last year. We will be using the **open-table conferencing format** or **buffet format** that is used in many schools at this grade level. To clarify, the upper school (grades 6 through 10) core teachers as well as the enrichment teachers will be spread out in the gymnasium and chapel areas, each at their own table. Parents can conference with whichever teacher they choose as long as that table is open and no other parent is conferencing. If a certain teacher is in a conference they can either wait in the designated waiting area or conference with another teacher that has an open table at that time. There are no sign-up sheets for these conferences.

Remember that each conference won't take too long because each teacher only has your student for one, two, or three courses, unlike the elementary age self-contained classroom. The upper school teachers are excited about this format and believe it will provide easier access and less waiting time.

These conferences will occur on the same days and at the same times as the K-5 conferences. Please note that the students will also be released at 11:30AM on those days.

**8th Grade Rummage Sale Successful!** Many thanks to all of you that put in countless hours gathering, storing, hauling, setting up, selling, taking down and hauling away all the items for the Rummage Sale. The grand total from sales was \$2,402.75. WOW! Great job, everyone!! This event's earnings really helped boost the funds that it will take to get the 8th Graders to England in April 2009. We also got very generous donations of items from Wee Ones Reruns, Clothes Rack, and delicious Rocket Donuts. Be sure to give a thank you and your business to these generous donors.

**Teacher In-Service Day is Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup>** – **There is no school for students.** Teachers will be working on PowerSchool and our self-study.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Sadler  
Head of School