



# The Midpointe

News and opinion for Southpointe Academy families

## February 25, 2010

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## **ANTI-SOCIAL NETWORKING**

It is official! I am a dinosaur! I was informed of this by one of my senior colleagues this week, so it must be right. The evidence presented for this judgment included my powerful aversion to Facebook, Twitter, Buzz, Messenger and other such programs (hereafter all included in my use of 'Facebook')

I admit to the aversion. I do not, however, believe this makes me a dinosaur. Rather, I think before long the world will agree that Facebook, and other, so-called social networking sites are actually anti-social networking sites. Far from bringing people together, they appear to provide the perfect vehicle for defamation, vulgarity, harassment, threats, grooming and so on. At least this appears to be the case for their young adolescent users.

This is not something any of us should be taking lightly. While we happily imagine our children poring over homework, or sleeping the blissful night away, they may rather be 'on Facebook'. When they are doing this, they are vulnerable, for they share their thoughts, their hopes, their feelings, their very lives with many others. These 'others' are given the power of knowledge which they can, and, to judge from what we have to deal with here, often do, abuse.

We hear from students and parents of great personal distress caused by postings on Facebook. We know, from news reports and professional journals, of cases where young adolescents have been so disturbed by how they were being portrayed on Facebook, that they have taken their own lives, leaving anguished parents wondering how they did not know their child was in such danger.

As adults, we like to think we have the sort of relationships with our children that would make such things impossible; that we would notice a change in behaviour or attitude, that we are so approachable our children would tell us they were troubled. But, the nature of our busy lives, and the unsavoury nature of the postings that distress our children, make such expectations, at least for some of us, perhaps more hopeful than realistic.

The fact is that sites like Facebook present a danger to our children; if we would not let them wander Vancouver's downtown eastside alone at night, we should not allow them alone on Facebook. All the experts on cyber-bullying agree that computers used by children should be in full view and monitored by parents.

Children will be adults soon enough. Then they can decide for themselves. Until then, they need our care and protection.

*Graham Baldwin*

## **NEW SCHOOL PROJECT UPDATE**

\$6,379,202 is our current total as we make our way towards the \$7,500,000 required. Work continues as we meet families, explain our vision and try to earn their support.

As I reported earlier, the Board has, however, made the decision to proceed with the Project, so we are now in the municipal process that leads to the necessary development permit.

In anticipation of a Public Hearing, to be held if required on April 20, there is a public information meeting on March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7pm at South Delta Secondary School. (As we reported at many meetings, we had been led to believe that a Public Hearing would not be necessary. Given, however, the 'landmark' nature of our project at the entrance to Tsawwassen, the Council wishes to give the public an opportunity to comment.

On the construction front, we remain confident of our September 2011 opening date.

## **FACULTY NEWS**

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Ms. Samantha Romonko to teach French. Ms. Romonko is a graduate (1989) of Hull University in the UK, where she majored in French Language and Literature and spent the third year of her studies at Universite de Francois Rabelais in Tours, France), and of the University of British Columbia where she recently completed her B.Ed. degree.

Ms. Romonko has extensive experience in teaching, both in Canada and Japan (she is also fluent in Japanese) and brings to us a strong desire to build our French program to the outstanding level we all wish to see.

Ms. Romonko is already committed on Monday's for this school year, but she will join us for the other four days starting next week.

Ms Romonko and her family are residents of Tsawwassen and looking forward to joining the Southpointe family. Please give her a warm welcome.

(Please note, a separate letter is being prepared for the parents of students affected by this change –it will be in the report card next week.)

## **SPRING BREAK TRIPS**

This Spring Break sees students travelling on two overseas trips. The European History trip, designed to supplement the AP European History curriculum, is visiting Budapest, Vienna, Prague and Berlin, while the Archimedes trip is following in the footsteps of famous mathematicians in Greece.

We hope all participants remember that these tours are possible only through the voluntary participation of the accompanying teachers, who deserve the certainty of excellent manners, co-operation and behaviour throughout.

It is hard to overstate the educational value of travel, so we hope everyone has an enriching, fulfilling, enjoyable and safe trip.

## **INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE**

The International Baccalaureate Program (IB) is regarded by many as the world's 'gold standard' in educational programs.

We are pleased to announce that we shall be introducing the Primary Years Program (PYP) of the IB to our JK-5 students in September 2010.

For us, this is further enrichment rather than dramatic change, for we have been teaching many elements of the program for the past several years. The main change we shall notice is the organization of learning around six themes of global significance:

- Who we are
- Where we are in place and time
- How we express ourselves
- How the world works
- How we organize ourselves
- Sharing the planet

We shall be exploring the program with parents further (we have already held one Parent Academy on the subject) next term at Parent Academies.

We are convinced that this decision will elevate to a higher level our already excellent Foundation Years Program.

## **PARENT AND STUDENT ACADEMY FOR GYP**

I am pleased to announce that a Parent and Student Academy to deal with GYP Programming for 2010/11 will be held at the school on Thursday March 25 at 5pm. It will be presented by Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Griffioen and Mrs. Kirkwood. While the specifics will be of greater interest to students entering Grades 11 and 12 (because of the more extensive choices to be made), those entering Grades 9 and 10 may find the insights presented of help.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Just a reminder that marks on Report Cards are cumulative: in other words, were the year's course to end now, the mark you see on this report card would be the mark awarded.

## **MEETINGS WITH THE HEADMASTER**

During the first week of Spring Break, Mr. Baldwin is available for parent and/or student meetings, either at the school or at other locations to suit. To enable effective planning for that week, please call Anne O'Halloran as soon as possible to book a time. Thanks.

## SCHOOL NEWS

### MEETING FOR STUDENTS GOING TO ON THE GRECIAN ODYSSEY TOUR



Congratulations, your educational adventure in a global classroom is fast approaching - in 15 days we will board the plane to Athens, Greece! Final preparations are underway: flight tickets are being issued, hotels have been booked, and our Tour Director, whose name is Barbara Gotsis, has been communicating with us and working hard to deliver an educational experience of a lifetime.

Our final meeting before the departure will be held in the Library, next **Thursday, March 4th** at lunch time. It will begin promptly at 12:40 and will finish at 1:10. At this meeting, you will receive your EF backpack, luggage tag, and a \$5 phone card, and we will go over the details of your final preparation, such as what to pack, what to expect, and what we, the Group Leaders expect of you. You will also receive the hotel information and a phone tree for communication between parents here at home, in case any change arises and information needs to be relayed. This meeting is also the time when any questions and concerns that you might have will be addressed.

As the safety of our students is of utmost importance to us as a school, issues of safety will be addressed at the meeting as well. We will be joined by Ms. Tice, who will be there to make sure we are all well prepared and aware of what we can do on our part to travel as safely as possible.

We are looking forward to seeing you all at this meeting!

Mrs. N. Sirotic & Mr. R. Florencio



## SPRING BREAK EUROPE TRIP

### ALL GRADE 12 EUROPEAN TRAVELERS

There will be an important and final meeting of all Grade 12 European travelers on Monday at lunch in Mr. Lupton's room.



**"JUMP ROPE FOR HEART"** will be on Tuesday, March 2, 2010. Pledge forms have been handed out to students. We have raised \$80 000 in the 5 years we have been involved with the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Our goal for 2010 is to raise \$20 000!! Let's "Jump into the Spirit of 2010"!

Thank you for your support, the Prefects, Community Recreation 12 and Mrs. Kozlowski.

## "WORLD FUSION NIGHT" a MULTICULTURAL EVENING!

This year we will gather at the Pearl Banquet Hall in Surrey, to share a meal, be entertained by the students and go wild with our "Limbo-Man-Extraordinaire" – "King Fish"! More details to follow!!!!

So mark your calendar, as tickets will be on sale soon!

Date: April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010

Place: Pearl Banquet Hall



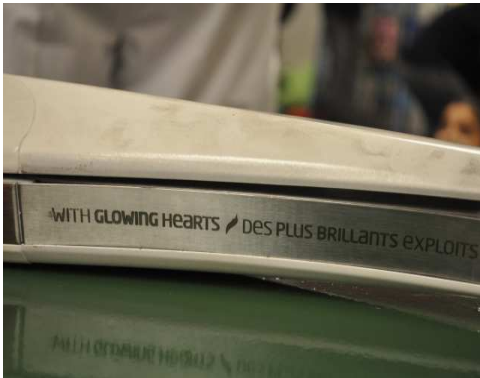
## OLYMPIC TORCH NEWS

Yesterday, Sandy Kwok-Swan invited a former student of hers, Blake Choquer to Southpointe Academy to share his story. Sandy has known Blake since he was in 8<sup>th</sup> Grade at Cambie Secondary.

Because of Blake's involvement in competitive sports as a youth and young adult plus giving back to the community through volunteering and coaching, he was invited to carry the torch in Tsawwassen.

The torch created quite a stir amongst all ages, who gathered in the Library, waiting for an opportunity to touch and have a picture taken with the torch and with Blake.

Thanks, Blake and Sandy!



# MYP NEWS

## MYP Alternate Programming Week

Southpointe Academy is dedicated to providing a variety of learning experiences for our students, and in keeping with this we have arranged an Alternate Programming Week (APW), where students have the opportunity to participate in a program of study that is different from their usual school day.



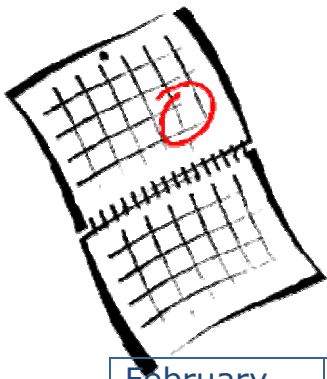
APW will run from Tuesday, April 6<sup>th</sup> to Friday, April 9<sup>th</sup> and students can choose from a variety of intellectual, manipulative and career orientated programs such as:



**Middle School Musical**  
**Early Childhood Experience / Babysitting and 1<sup>st</sup> Aid Course Certification**  
**Computer Animation**  
**Equestrian**  
**Hospitality/ Cooking / Running a Restaurant**  
**Pottery / Arts**  
**Reach Out**  
**Discover our City**  
**Sports Enthusiasts Wanted**  
**Scuba Diving**  
**Woodworking / Carving**  
**Triple Threat Performance!**  
**Formula MYP Car**



**\*Forms are due today, Thursday, February 25, by 3:30pm and is the FINAL DAY for students to hand in their "preliminary selections" for courses. Otherwise, if a form is not received by the deadline, students will be placed in a course!!!!**



## CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

**February 25 – March 19**

February 25 Thursday	MYP Alternative Week Forms due!
February 26 Friday	<b>SCHOOL CLOSED FOR OLYMPIC HOLIDAY</b>
March 1 Monday	5:30pm – 6:30pm – Grade 6 Project Discover - Parent Information Session in Studio Blue (Mrs. Fraser's Room, North Building)
March 2 Tuesday	8:30am – 1:30pm – "Jump Rope for Heart" at the Church Gym
March 3 Wednesday	7:00pm – Public Information Meeting regarding new school, held at South Delta Secondary School
March 4 Thursday	Europe Trip Departs
March 5 Friday	9:00am – 2:00pm – Grade 3 Field Trip to MacMillan Space Centre in Vancouver  Grade 6 Project Discover Forms <b>Due!</b>
March 5 Friday	<b>LAST DAY BEFORE SPRING BREAK!</b>
March 22 Monday	<b>FIRST DAY BACK TO SCHOOL</b>
EDUCAFE Monday – Friday	3.00pm to 3.30pm – There is always a hot pot of tea waiting to be shared! Why not drop by and meet Mr. Baldwin?





OH,  
CANADA!