

Sturgis Charter Public School



An International Baccalaureate Diploma School

Executive Director's Newsletter

April 3, 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.

Charter School Statehouse Day on April 29: Several Sturgis parents will be visiting the Statehouse in Boston on April 29 to meet with our senators and representatives and advocate for the support and expansion of charter schools. Parents are encouraged to contact Rachel Todoroff at the Sturgis Main Office if you are able to join us on this important day.

Career Day Coming to Sturgis: Sturgis is hosting a Career Day on Friday afternoon, April 17. All Sturgis students will be able to choose two career presentations that they would like to attend. More than thirty professionals from the Sturgis community will be sharing their knowledge about careers as diverse as: marine biology, newspaper journalism, forensic science, law enforcement, nursing, environmental engineering, banking, and accounting. Career Day should be a very helpful and informative event for our students.

IB News: We are all familiar with the rites of spring: tulips bloom in the garden, the Sox train at Fort Myers and Sturgis students work frantically to finish their Internal Assessments (I.A.) for the I.B. This week, every twelfth grade student submitted an I.A. to each of their subject teachers. Depending on the discipline, a student might need to write a paper, complete a project or lab or present an oral commentary. This assessment will constitute up to 30 % of the student's final grade for the I.B., and the rest of the mark will be based on the exams the student takes in May.

As always, the topics chosen by the students for their Internal Assessments prove fascinating and diverse. Examples of I.A. titles in some different disciplines include: *Poetic Graffiti at Pompeii* (HL Latin), *Probability in Various Games of Tennis* (HL Math), *Plankton Biodiversity* (SL Environmental Systems), *Effects of the Six Day War* (HL History), and *GM and the Changing U.S. Economy* (SL Business). These IA's will be sent to IB examiners all over the world for assessment, and Sturgis has already shipped papers to such places as Kenya, Norway, Malaysia, New Zealand and even the state of Virginia.

Kudos to Sturgis' students and teachers, as they have worked tirelessly to meet these IB deadlines!

IB Mock Exams: Sturgis seniors will be taking their mock IB exams on April 7-9. Using questions from past IB exams, these mock exams will help our students gain a very good perspective on the real IB exams that they will take in May. For students who complete their IB exam in May, the mock exam score will function at their final exam score for the course.

IB Psychology and History: Students have completed the IB Psychology Internal Assessment. Simple replications of experiments that investigate: "How 'Loaded' Questions Affect Memory Recall", "Whether Humans Believe What they Hear First About Others, or Not" were some of the highlights.

IB History HL Juniors have begun their IA's which are individual historical investigations of a topic of interest to the student. They should have them complete by the end of this school year. Some of the interesting choices are: "Were US foreign policy makers aware of the dangers Osama Bin Laden posed to the US at the time they supported and funded him?" "To what extent was Oliver North responsible for violations of Congressional Law during the Iran-Contra Scandal?"

Library News: Diane Klaiber and Marion Weeks would like to thank all the parents and faculty who supported the Sturgis Reference Room at the SPAuction last weekend. Through your generous donations, we were able to add 22 books, 2 DVD's and 1 magazine subscription to the Reference Room collection. The total value of your contribution is \$450.00.

Save the date!!! The 6th annual Literacy Coffeehouse will take place Thursday, May 28, 5:00 - 7:00 PM at the Cultural Center in Yarmouth. It will be a wonderful evening of poetry and fine cuisine (with the help of Sturgis chefs!) to raise money for the Cape Cod Literacy Council. Peter Steedman has agreed to be one of the readers. Will he repeat his Wild Child rap? Come and find out.

From the Guidance Office: Juniors and Post High School Planning: In the weeks ahead our guidance counselors will be meeting with current juniors to begin individual discussions regarding post high school plans. While it is not necessary, parents are welcome to play a role in these discussions. Parents wishing to do so should contact their child's guidance counselor: Mrs. Fogg, students with last names A - K; Mrs. Vari, students with last names L - Z; or Ms. Aiello, selected students.

Prom: Tickets for the 2009 Junior / Senior Prom being held May 30th are now on sale during lunch at school. The cost is \$60 per person and the deadline for purchase is May 15th. Juniors and seniors intending to invite a guest who does not currently attend Sturgis must submit a completed guest form to Mr. Andre for approval before a ticket can be purchased. Forms can be obtained at the ticket sales table during lunch or from Mrs. Hyer.

The senior class trip will be held on Thursday, June 4th and promises to be a fun-filled day in Boston! We'll depart Sturgis at 8:30 am and travel first to the Franklin Park Zoo. After spending about 2 1/2 hours in the animal kingdom we'll venture into the water worlds exhibited at the New England Aquarium and take in an IMax movie while we're there. That will be followed by a little shopping and then an outrageous dinner at Dick's Last Resort - all located at Faneuil Hall. We'll return to Sturgis at approximately 10:00pm - just in time for seniors to get a good nights' rest so they'll be bright and cheery for graduation practice on Friday! The ticket price of \$35 includes transportation, all admissions, and dinner. Sign-up for the trip is required by April 17th with

permission slips and payment in full due no later than April 29th so that required reservations can be confirmed.

Please make purchases for these events as early as possible to assist us in making necessary arrangements. Thank you.

Chess Team Wins It All: The Chess team played Fairhaven in the finals took the championship this year. Members include Evan Taylor, Jack Gayer, Ethan White, Allan Silva and Adrian Baird. Congratulations to the Chess team!!!

Hiking and Backpacking Club: The fourth hike of our Canal-to-P'Town series was on Saturday Mar. 21st. The club hiked from Crab Creek in Yarmouth to South Brewster, about 12.5 miles and took us about 6.5 hours. We walked through numerous conservation parcels, including the vast and forbidding Punkhorn in Brewster (800 acres of maze-like trails and cart paths between numerous Great Ponds). There were no major hills on this trek.

H2O Campaign kicks off in April: Cassie Ewing, Grade 10, has been working to raise funds for H2O (Help To Others). H2O links schools in the United States with schools in Africa to raise money to provide clean drinking water and water for crops. Our goal is to raise \$1884 during the month of April. To achieve this goal, we are seeking donations of bottled water, either spring water or flavored water, from the Sturgis community. A special thanks to all the parents who have already donated water- but to meet our goal, we still need much more!! We will sell water from the main office through out the month of April. We are also encouraging students to take a pledge to drink only water during the school days from April 13-17th. They could purchase water from H2O volunteers or simply donate the money they save from not buying soda, etc. in our collection jar.

Plymouth and Brockton bus riders: We understand that the fare for weekly passes on the P & B bus has been increased recently. Parents are encouraged to express their concerns regarding this significant increase to the bus company. Please call 508.746.0378.

Notes from the Reference Room: Business is booming in the library this year as we collaborate with more classes on research projects than ever before. For example, we have worked with the English department on four major cross-curricular projects since December. All four projects explore literature through historical research to provide context and enrich understanding.

Alicia Fenney's three sophomore classes researched Renaissance history and philosophy for research papers on *Macbeth*. Topics included humanism, medicine, Divine Right of Kings, great chain of being, Renaissance attitudes towards human nature, relationships between men and women, and witchcraft. Students chose a Renaissance topic and demonstrated how these themes influenced Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.

To understand the background of *The Great Gatsby*, Marsha Yalden's sophomores researched the Roaring Twenties, prohibition, 1920's trends, the Jazz age and famous personalities of the period. Students wrote magazine articles and worked in small groups to give oral presentations on the history of the 1920's as it relates to *The Great Gatsby*.

After reading about a futuristic society in *Fahrenheit 451*, the freshmen classes of Anna Heick Botsford and Marsha Yalden researched the history of past and present utopian models of living. The communities studied included the Shakers, Amish, Brook Farm, Oneida Perfectionists, and Zoar Separatists. Students worked in groups of 3 to create a model utopian society.

Steve McDowell's freshmen classes are reading Yukio Mishima's *The Sound of Waves*. To enrich their understanding of the text, some of his students researched post-war Japanese culture to see how traditional values have changed.

To prepare for research projects, we expand our resources by borrowing books and other materials from libraries all over Cape Cod through the CLAMS system. We sometimes borrow as many as 50 books for a research project. The Hyannis Public Library provides great support by letting us funnel all our requests through our neighboring library. If you see us rolling carts of books along Main Street, it is a sign that Sturgis students are being supported by local public libraries. The Reference Room may be small but our ability to use academic databases and interlibrary loan resources extends our research capabilities well beyond our small collection.

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