

Sturgis Charter Public School



An International Baccalaureate Diploma School

Executive Director's Newsletter

January 29, 2010

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.

A Huge Thank You to Sturgis Parents! Sturgis parents were significant among the supporters of the charter school movement during the recent passing of the Education Reform Bill by the legislature. Thanks so much for your emails, phone calls, and other contacts to our state senators and representatives!

Enrollment Lottery for 2010: The enrollment lottery for admission to Sturgis for Grade 9 in 2010-11 was held on January 14. We had 242 applicants for Grade 9, up from 229 applicants in 2009. Sturgis accepted 100 students into Grade 9 and placed 142 students onto the waiting list. In addition, we had 11 applicants for Grade 10, which were added to the Grade 10 waiting list that now totals 118.

Visitors from Mashpee High School: Three staff members from Mashpee High School will be visiting Sturgis on Monday, February 8 as their school has expressed interest in exploring the IB as an option for their students.

Professional Half Day on February 26: Sturgis will have a Professional Half Day on Friday, February 26. Students will be dismissed at 11:45 a.m.

Winter Sports Update: As of this writing our basketball and cheerleading teams are in the middle of their seasons. The boys basketball team needed to win 3 of its final six games to qualify for its second consecutive state tournament. Max Young, Kyle Healy, Ben Porter, Dan Beckner and Zac Arndt have all provided steady leadership for the team, which lost several key players from last season.

The girls basketball team has been lead by the excellent defense and energy of Kayley Mead, while Marley McSweeney and Vani Patel have led the offense. Losing Brittany Korbel to a knee injury has hurt the team's competitiveness; but it's allowed newcomers like Senior Lauren McCann an opportunity to contribute more.

Senior Recognition Night will take place on Thursday, Feb 11th for the girls varsity team and on Thursday, Feb 4th for the boys varsity and cheerleading teams.

Creativity, Action, & Service (CAS): The Seniors are entering their last quarter to begin and/or complete any C.A.S. activities and projects. The deadline to submit all journal entries and adult supervisor evaluations is Thursday, April 1. The formal C.A.S. essay is due Friday, April 16. Instructions for the essay will be given to students in March.

IB News: Following the Holiday vacation, Sturgis seniors returned to school to face a major component of their IB English grade: *The English Oral Commentary*. Our students in Higher Level and Standard Level English must enter a room at the Baptist Church on Main Street and choose one sealed envelope, of which they do not know the specific contents. Our students had been preparing to discuss a multitude of works that had been discussed in last the last two years of study. These include *Hamlet*, poetry from Bishop, and Forster's *Room with a View*, yet any one of these pieces could be in the selected envelope. After twenty minutes of quiet contemplation, the student was asked to analyze the selection in the form of a literary criticism. The commentary was recorded and will be sent overseas shortly to be formally assessed by the International Baccalaureate. Our seniors recognize this as a rite of passage on their way to getting a high school diploma from Sturgis. It is a very different English experience than their peers on Cape.

Seniors in the Theory of Knowledge have also completed their final presentations. These students must choose a current event and analyze the situation using the concepts and terms of ToK. The presentations were diverse and fascinating. Some of them included:

To what extent do emotion, reason and perception affect the culture and beliefs of the United States in regards to Islam: An investigation of Shepard Fairey and main stream media following 9/11?

To what extent does perception and language play a role in the different interpretations of social science: An investigation of the debate on Mental Health parity?

To what extent is society influenced by the social, scientific and religious images and messages promoted in pop culture: An investigation of the implications of the Twilight phenomenon?

To what extent does culture and perception influence the use of evidence in explaining whether math is found in the natural sciences or created by humans: An investigation on the implications of future math?

As you can imagine from the titles, the presentations were thought provoking and produced lively discussion.

Auction News: The SPA annual April auction is coming! Donations for the auction are needed!!(Ex. golf passes, a boat trip, weekend getaway(s) in a home(s) you might be willing to share, framed oil paintings/prints, 4 hours of yard work, oil changes, handmade crafts such as handmade jewelry, hand-blown glass, a photography session, etc.) All items donated should be dropped off to Rachel Todoroff, at Sturgis's main office. Please consider helping Sturgis by sharing items that can be auctioned to help raise money for the Sturgis students. If you would prefer to help out on the day of the auction, this assistance is also needed. Perhaps you, as a parent, would prefer to help create baskets for the auction. There are lots of ways to help. If you have further questions, feel free to contact Stephanie Miles at smiles@falmouth.k12.ma.us, or Barbara at mikeggonefishing@aol.com, or come to the next SPA meeting. Many thanks.

Sturgis Soundings Special Edition: All Time Favorite Books:

All Time Favorite Books is a tribute to Gretchen Buntschuh who is bravely fighting pancreatic cancer. This special edition is a celebration of Gretchen's distinctive contributions to Sturgis and her life-long love of reading. She has served Sturgis in many capacities since 2002: English Teacher, Head of English Department, Assistant Director, Grant-Writer, and IB Extended Essay Advisor. Gretchen inspired the creation of Sturgis Soundings.

For access to an electronic copy of *All Time Favorite Books* which includes the favorites of 44 members of the Sturgis community, go to:

<http://www.sturgischarterhschool.org/library/documents/Soundings.pdf>

College Guidance: The Guidance Staff is launching the College Search process with Grade 11 parents and students. Very soon we will be delivering detailed information in the classroom and guiding students in the use of research tools. The comprehensive booklet "Charting Your Course" will be delivered to all member of the junior class for easy reference over the next two years. We are also beginning to meet with each junior individually.

On the evening of February 23 we will have an expert in the field of admissions for a Junior Parent Night. Our guest speaker will be Paul Lynskey, of the Massachusetts Educational Finance Authority. Further information is forthcoming.

Seniors have made application to over 150 schools thus far, with many, many acceptances.

Advisory News: Robin Singer and Jenn Kirk advisories supported Made by Survivors, a home-craft company selling items made by women and children rescued from brothels and other types of modern slavery. Sturgis students from these advisories took a consignment of handcrafted merchandise before the holidays and sold them on behalf of the survivors. They sold \$427.25 worth of the \$706.00 consignment, sent them a check for this amount, and shipped the rest back.

The students gained a great deal from the efforts they made on behalf of these former victims, who are supporting themselves through the sale of these handcrafts. The students made posters, went to other advisories to educate their peers about the problem of modern slavery (primarily in Asia and the former Soviet countries), and set up the merchandise at lunch and sold it to both students and faculty. Junior Joe Roderick made a spread sheet and kept excellent records of the sales and funds collected.

This activity was a reflection of the IB Learner Profile in a variety of ways. It was during the time advisories were exploring "Caring" and it certainly expressed this aspect of the IB. However they also were "Communicators" and made themselves "Knowledgeable", they were "Principled" as they chose this activity and they were "Reflective" on how best to help. In this project, they were an excellent reflection of the Sturgis spirit.

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