

Jean Vanier Catholic High School Parent Council

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 "For Parents" section

Annual Newsletter

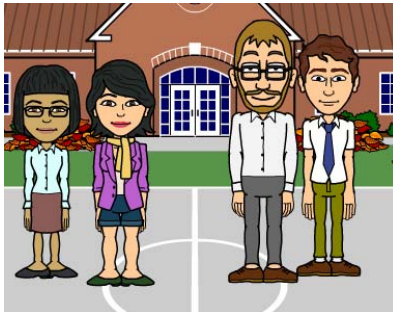
From the JVCHS Parent Council

Well here we are once again at the end of another school year and wondering where all that time went so quickly - well maybe only for the parents and guardians!

The end of the 2011 - 2012 school year marks the second year of the JVCHS Parent Council. So far we have been a small group but I would suggest that our achievements have been mighty so far.

One of our goals is to understand and respond to the needs of our school community including parents, guardians, students, and staff to ensure that all of our activities within our school are vibrant, fun and faith-filled. I believe we have taken important steps towards achieving part of that goal. Rome wasn't built in a single day but every column counts.

Last year we designed and launched a parent survey using an electronic based tool known as Survey Monkey. You will read more about what we heard about your interests and needs from this survey later in this



newsletter. I'd like to share our response.

We were successful this past year in securing funding through a "Parent Reaching Out" Grant graciously awarded by the Ministry of Education. This grant has enabled us to sponsor some key speakers who have brought forward topics identified through our parent survey as important areas for further learning.

As you may recall last year the JVCHS Parent Council hosted Chris Vollum's "Facebook 101 + Twitter" presentation. This year we brought you Brian Weishar "The Teenage Brain" and Dr. Mark Quigg's "Teenage Wellness". Both presentations

were well received and stimulated a fascinating discussion within the audience.

We cannot fail to mention the work school staff do on Parent Council. Our success is entirely based on the great relationships we have developed with the school staff that sits on the Parent Council. We could not do what we do, without them.

It is our hope that the JVCHS Parent Council will continue to attract engaging and informative speakers to our school for your benefit. We hope to involve you in the school community; a relationship that will benefit you and your family. What better way than by joining us during our parent council meetings held every third Tuesday of each month. Our first Parent Council meeting in the 2012- 2013 school year will be held on September 18th, 2012. Have a safe and enjoyable summer!

John Fisher
 Chair
 JVCHS Parent Council

Dates to put in your calendar

Thanksgiving Day	Monday, October 8th
Parent, Teacher Interviews	Thursday, October 18th, 3:30 -5, 6-7:30 pm
Profession Develop-	Friday, November 9th
Parent Council Meeting	Tuesday, November 13th, 6-7:30
Halloween Dance	Thursday, October 25
Report Cards	Beginning of November

Last Year's Highlights:

- Collected and Analyzed Parent Survey Responses
- Coffee and cookies provided at Parent/Teacher Interview Night
- Teenage Wellness 101 Speaker Evening with Brian Weishar, Secondary Curriculum Consultant and Dr. Mark Quigg
- Applied for PRO Grant to host speaker for next year

Survey: What You Had to Say

As a new Parent Council group we were very interested in knowing more about you. The voice of parents is important to school administration and staff

and is encouraged by the Ministry of Education. The survey will also inform how the parent



council can better represent you and offer you what you want as a parent. Here are some highlights of the results:

- 50% are happy with your current involvement in school affairs
- 50% would like to be more involved with the school (suggestion...parent council)
- Half to three-quarter of you felt that the following

are effective ways of communication: meet the teacher, automated phone messages, report cards and parent/teacher interviews

- Close to 50% of you are interested in learning more about: communicating with teens, self-esteem, motivating my child and time management skills.

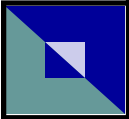
Thank you to those who completed the survey (N=123).

Interested in joining Parent Council?? Great!!! Complete section on the reverse page.



2011-2012 Parent Council

John Fisher, Chair
Geoffrey Adamson, Secretary
Sandy Nichols (Parent Member)
Connie Gray (Parent Member)
Monica Essig (Teacher Rep)
Devin Pickett (Teacher Rep)
No Student Rep



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Vanier Teachers Recognized

Three Jean Vanier Teachers were recognized at the June Board Meeting for their individual excellence in the classroom.

Ms. McKee, Mr. Damignani and Mr. Michalenko were awarded the **Inclusion Excellence Award** sponsored by *Simcoe Community Services* in the presence of the Director and Trustees of the Board.

This Award is presented to teachers and students who show compassion and respect for individuals with disabilities, and display innovation and creativity to ensure learning for all pupils. Congratulations Ms. McKee, Mr. Damignani and Mr. Michalenko!

Message Board

Kenya Experience

Our 29 students and staff returned from their pilgrimage in Kenya on Saturday May 19, 2012 after more than two weeks in the Maasai Mara.

We had an incredible experience with our hosts, **Free the Children**, who gave us every opportunity to learn from the Masai people and appreciate their beautiful land. Our group helped in the early building stages of **Oleleshwa Girl's High School**. We built up the sub-floor of the girl's dormitory which will, within a short year, house up to 60 girls. We also helped lay the brick and mortar of the computer/science labs.



The highlight of our pilgrimage was no doubt teaching and playing with the many children of **Sikirrar Primary School**. We realized as we played with these children that these very same young girls would be the children to eventually attend and learn at Oleleshwa H. S. As with any pilgrims we are gifted with a richness of reflections, experiences and ideas as we returned to our families and our school. From all of us, a heartfelt thanks to all of you who supported us with fundraising and your good wishes.

Mountain Bike Championship

On Friday May 25th five students represented Jean Vanier at the High School Mountain Bike Championships. Tate, Colin, Jack, Liam and Diane all raced the exciting single tracks of Hardwood Hills finishing at least top half in each of their categories. Mrs. Knights and the rest of Jean Vanier are extremely proud of their accomplishments. Well done!

Teenage Wellness 101

The survey told us you were interested in better understanding and communicating with your teenager and that was one of the themes of our Teenage Wellness 101 evening held February 15, 2012. We were very pleased with our first speaker, Brian Weishar. He is a Secondary Curriculum Consultant for the board and his talk was on the teenage brain. In Weishar's words, "The adolescent brain is under construction." Weishar referred to evidence based brain research explained why our teenagers behave the way they do, feel the way they do and communicate with us, the way they do. It was an enlightening talk that stimulated a great discussion among the participants.

Our second speaker, Dr. Mark Quigg, is a local physician who has spent many years in a Toronto Trauma Unit. He provided alarming statistic of the impact of drug usage on our youth culture.

Dr. Quigg reviewed articles relating to mental health issues and drug use by adolescents. He provided frightening insights into the issues and practical approaches to dealing with the issues.

The evening was a great success but it took many people to put it all together. Jean Vanier school staff did an amazing job at recommending our speakers, setting up and providing refreshments. Thank you to Bob, Bill, Devin and Monica. Our Parent

Council Chair, John and Secretary, Jeffrey, worked diligently to get the word out in community papers, speaking on local radio shows and speaking to many parents during the Parent/Teacher Evening. Sandy and Connie, Parent Council members did their best to make everyone attending the event, feel welcome. The students who were fundraising for the Kenya trip accepted donations for refreshments. The generosity shown by the coffee drinkers and cookie eaters was tremendous.

We hope you will attend our future events as we have your best interest in mind. Thank you again to everyone involved!!



If you are interested in joining the Parent Council, complete the section below and hand in at the office or email us at:
jeanvanierparent@hotmail.ca

Yes, I am interested in joining the Parent Council (Meetings are once a month)

Name _____ Email _____ Phone _____