



From the Principal - Mr. Bob Morris

Congratulations to our four volleyball teams on their achievements this season. Our “B” level teams were successful in learning how to play and work on their skills. Our “A” level teams played very well. The “A” boy’s team won the school’s first CWAJHAA banner which was quite an accomplishment.

I have officiated football for many years. This year I was awarded two provincial high school final games on Saturday with the final game being the Tier 1 ranked game (aka - the biggest HS football assignment for the year). I was excited about the assignments and looked forward to doing the two games with the other assigned officials. For me, the process starts in early fall to let my local association know that I am interested in being considered for a provincial final and work hard toward that goal. There are a lot of emotions that players and fans bring to the game. One team will win a trophy and banner and the other team goes away as the runner-up. No one wants to be the runner up. This weekend, I found the fans of both losing teams to be over the top with negative comments hurled at anyone and everyone. The losing fans in my first game kept berating the young official that was working the sideline for the game. The fans of the team that lost the final game even accused the people holding the downsbox/sticks of cheating. It was pretty bad. One fan decided to berate myself and another official as we tried to get into my vehicle. I have heard fans that were boisterous and loud before but never to this level. Earlier in the season, there were three different incidents of fans behaving badly toward officials with hot coffee being thrown at an official by a fan. I can see why it is harder and harder to find new people who want to officiate sports.

I was thinking about our school teams and privately wondering, how do other schools, parents, visitors view Ponoka Christian School student athletes and fans? Do we model Christian character to others? I hope we model this, but everyone has their own opinion. Not all Christian schools reflect their vision and mission statement.

There was a high school football game played in Alberta between a public school and Christian school this season. Something happened with the coaches from the Christian school who got quite negative with the officials and made multiple comments that were not very “positive”. I know a few of the guys that worked the game and the coach ended up being ejected for his words and his players got vocal and the game was called because the refing crew refused to continue taking the verbal abuse. An incident report was filed, and the coach was assessed a one game suspension. He circumvented the punishment by quickly scheduling an “exhibition” game so he could sit out a meaningless game and be ready for the next league game. The

league said no to the additional game and the coach had to miss the important playoff game as a result. The team lost their game, and the season was over.

It reminded me of a time many years ago where I was officiating in a high school basketball provincial championship weekend and witnessed poor behaviour. I remember one game where the fans (from a Christian school) were rude, acted like poor sports, and were quite exhausting to listen to. One public school teacher volunteer from the host school made a comment that the team should remove "Christian" from the front of their jerseys because of the way some of the players behaved and their fans.

I am not implying that all Christian schools behave this way, they are the exception and not the norm. Most interactions that I have had have been positive and encouraging.

Jesus' instruction in Matthew 5-7 is called the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus shares with us the requirement for godly character. He then goes on to remind us in verse 14-16: "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

Sometimes life is hard, and we have to make every effort to live in a way that pleases the Lord. I love the game of football and have been blessed to be able to play it in my youth and to officiate it for a long time. I have done games in Central AB for many years and have been able to work some great games in Edmonton as well. I am reminded every time that I go out on the field that many know that I am a Christian and a Christian school principal and that my words and behaviour should be reflective of my faith. Many of those I officiate games with are unchurched, nonbelievers. Psalm 7:8 says: "let the Lord judge the peoples. Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, according to my integrity, O Most High." I need to model my faith, even when I am not at church, home, or at school. I am not going to say it is easy. In the last few years, I have matured a little and maybe gotten wiser when I show up for a football game. Sometimes there are games and positions that are less desirable to do, and I try to show up to each event with a positive attitude and do my best. It is my hope that Ponoka Christian School athletes, coaches, and fans are a reflection of our mission statement and are ambassadors for our school.

From the Board - Mrs. Jessica Stolk

Our Fall Society Meeting was held last week Thursday. Thank-you to those who attended, and a reminder to anyone who may not have been able to make it... questions or comments can be brought to the Board at anytime.

The Fall Drive officially wrapped up on November 17th. This year, as of the printing of this newsletter, a total of \$58,300.00 out of our \$80,000.00 goal has been raised. The Board would like to thank everyone who has donated as well as all those who canvassed; it is a blessing to have such a supportive Society. Just a reminder that donations are graciously accepted at any time, and if you would like a tax receipt for 2023 to please have those in by the end of the year.

We would also like to take this opportunity to say farewell to Mrs. Micayla Nanninga as she goes on maternity leave. We pray that all goes well in the last few weeks before baby arrives and that Micayla and her husband, Sam, would be blessed and given all they need as they start this new chapter in their lives and raise their child to follow HIM. Please pray also for the Kindergarten and Grade 2 classes as transitions are made to new teachers. We are very thankful and blessed that teachers have already been working together to make these transitions go as smoothly as possible.

Our next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 6. If you have any comments or concerns, please let us know.

On Behalf of the PCS Board,
Jessica Stolk

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.” Colossians 3:23-24

Sports News - Mr. Josh Van Doesburg

We had a fantastic volleyball season this year! Thank you to all the volunteers, parents, and other family members that came out to support the ‘A’ Volleyball teams the past 2 Saturdays. Congratulations to the girl’s team that finished 5th in their CWAJHAA tournament. As well, congratulations to the boy’s team as they won gold in their tournament, winning the first CWAJHAA banner in PCS history!

A basketball sign up was set up for the last couple weeks. We will be having a **tryout for the boy’s team on Tuesday, December 5**. We will be looking to have a ‘B’ and ‘C’ boys team this year. Please talk to your children if they would like to play.

As for girls’ basketball there was limited interest this year. We are short 1 or 2 players for a ‘C’ team. Please reach out if your child is interested but didn’t sign up.

Also, just a reminder to the volleyball teams to please return your jerseys and shorts (boys) in order to receive your jersey deposit back.

Blessings, Josh Van Doesburg

Important Dates

November 30	Report Cards go home
December 7	Makkinga Market order pick up at the school
December 13	Christmas Program @ 7pm
December 15	Gr 1-3 Christmas Craft afternoon
December 19	Student/Staff Christmas Lunch
December 20	Gr 4-5 Christmas Craft afternoon
December 21	Christmas Chapel
December 22	NO SCHOOL – Christmas Break starts
January 8	First day back after Christmas break
January 18	Hot Lunch – Build your own Sub
January 19	Extra Kindergarten Day

Please note the following date change on your calendars: **Friday, Feb 9** will now be a regular school day and there will be no school on **Friday, Feb 16** due to the AISCA Teacher Workshop.

Christmas Program – December 13 @ 7pm

The students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 are busy preparing the Christmas program, “**When I Think About Christmas**” We would love to see all the students that evening as they have been working very hard on their songs and readings. We ask that the students please be in their classrooms ready to go at **6:45pm**.

Please invite family and friends to join us as we reflect on the majesty of Jesus who would give himself for our salvation.

From the Education Committee

At PCS we offer the junior high classes (gr 6-9) complimentary courses often known as options. We have a staff member, Mrs. Hovius, that is dedicated to look after and plan these courses, relying on volunteers and teachers to help teach and facilitate these courses.

Every year Alberta Education surveys parents of students in grades four to nine, as well as all students in those grades, with one of the parent questions being: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities your child has to learn about the following topics at school: Another language, art, drama, music, technology. The Education Committee noticed that the student responses were different than the parent responses in the areas of fine arts, careers, and technology.

To get a better understanding of what complimentary courses PCS should offer we would like to get feedback from all parents on which courses they are desiring the most. A survey will be sent out via email in the next day or two that we are asking all parents to fill out, even if you do

not currently have a child in junior high. This will help us in the planning of complimentary courses that we offer in the future. If you have any problems with accessing or filling out the survey, please contact the school.

From the Development Committee

Makkinga Market Fundraising orders will be available for pick up at the school between 2:30 - 4pm. Please make arrangements for someone to pick up for you if you are unable to pick up.

Attached to this newsletter is a gift card order form. It is not too late to order some gift cards for the Christmas season. They make great gifts as well as you can use them for those special events that you may have planned for Christmas break. Please have all order forms in by **Dec 7!**

Work has begun on the new PCS website, and we are very excited for the big reveal aimed for the new year! One of the features that make a website great is to have pictures of students, in groups or doing activities, featured on our site. **Please contact the school if you do not give consent to have photos that include your child on the website for promotional use.**

Student Recognition

Congratulations to Shawn Hoeksema and Brodey Thalen for achieving the “Standard of Excellence” on their Gr 6 LA exam last year and to Carson Ingwersen and Kolten Rispen for achieving the “Standard of Excellence” on their Gr 6 Math exam!

We would also like to thank Shawn Hoeksema and Ian Hovius for their hard work in scorekeeping many volleyball games during the evening for the A Girls volleyball qualifiers.

Thank you to Tasha Cordell for sponsoring the gift certificates.

Potato Fundraiser

Any amounts of potatoes are available. Please make a donation you think is fair.

To order, phone Hylko and Hillie Feitsma: 403-783-6000

The proceeds from the potato sales have been graciously donated to Ponoka Christian School.