

Reflector

PRCS / HCHS

UPDATE FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL POINT OF INTEREST

- Iowa Tests of Basic Skills will be administered to 3rd-8th grade students the week of March 27. Please make sure your student(s) is well rested.
- The end of the PRCS 3rd quarter/HCHS midterms was Friday, March 17.
- Spring Break is scheduled for April 3-7.
- The school auction is April 21. Please consider joining us in support of our school.
- Open House is the morning of April 25. Parents, grandparents, and friends of the school are invited to visit our classrooms on this day.

Third Quarter’s end. It has provided an opportunity for teachers to challenge their students on all they have learned in the past quarter. Spring Break. It will provide a time to pause and be refreshed from diligent labors, whether seated before or standing at the lectern. And at this quarter’s end, the Board desires to provide to the Association an overview of past and continuing efforts as we assess and continue planning to implement the purposes for which our schools, through the Association For Protestant Reformed Education were founded.

The Apostle Paul speaks to associations in his counsel to the Philippians, and also to us today. An association is a group of people organized for a joint purpose – and Paul counsels: “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 2:4-5) This is our prayer, that this mindset guide all planning, all consideration and action of the Board and Association members, in this upcoming semester and years to come.

Foremost, to the staff, volunteers, Ladies Auxiliary and supporters, thank you for your commitment each day to our students in assisting our parents in raising up the children in the fear of the Lord. To our students, it is our hope and prayer you are engaging diligently in your calling individually as student, as well as communally seeking the building up in Christ of your classmates.

At the start of the third quarter, we have issued a warm welcome to Ms. Melanie Hanko to the high school staff. Ms. Hanko graduated this past December from Grand Valley State University with a teacher degree and math major and is leading high school math classes and Health and Wellness classes. We are grateful to Mr. Tom Bergman, from Covenant, who has assisted in teaching Functions, Statistics, and Trigonometry (FST) remotely in the past semester. As well, much thanks to Mrs. Teagan Van Overloop, for both developing and teaching computer courses this past semester. We are also grateful for the time and effort Mrs. Sydney Gagliardi has spent in the high school. Mrs. Karen Van Baren and Mrs. Rachel Hillemonds have stepped in to teach the English courses, and Mr. Ralph Medema is teaching Spanish I. We pray the Lord’s blessing on Teagen and her husband, as they eagerly await the birth of a child this semester, and congratulations to Sydney and her husband, with the birth of a baby boy in the past weeks.

The Education Committee has conducted mid-year interviews with the teachers and staff of our schools in early January. We are thankful for their commitment, energy and zeal in their labors as they instruct our covenant youth. We encour-

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age you to take time to uplift these men and women in their work. Teaching contract offers have been extended to all existing faculty and we welcome their return for the 2023/2024 school year.

For the past twenty-one years Mr. Ryan Van Overloop has worked and served as administrator to PRCS. Recently, he has informed the Board that he has greatly enjoyed his years and the challenges as administrator of PRCS, but would like to focus his efforts moving forward as an educator of our covenant children.

In reviewing the open administrator position, the Board assessed the scope, focus and emphasis of the administrator positions of PRCS and HCHS, and expressed a desire to transition to a full time administrator position for K-12 administration to lead our schools. The focus of this position would be for a full time, non-teaching administrator to devote their attention to administration, including, among other things, teacher development, curriculum development and review and communications with parents and teachers. In the last several weeks, we received a well-qualified applicant, and after significant dialogue to ensure that our applicant has the skill set and vision to meet our existent needs in a full time position, we are happy to announce that, commencing this summer, Mr. David Mahtani will begin serving as our full time K-12 Administrator.

David has a background as an educator, an administrator, and student counselor, and we look forward to supporting him and working with him in this new role. David is married to Madri, with four children, Myra (6th), Selah (5th), Zephaniah (3rd), and Asher (pre-school).

As we transition from two teacher/administrator positions, we express thanks to Mr. Ryan Van Overloop and to Mr. Ralph Medema for their efforts and time spent leading both PRCS and HCHS in past years. We are grateful to Ryan and Ralph for their many years of leadership and for all of their contributions to our school, the staff, and dedication – and we look forward to their continuing impact as they look to contribute as full time educators. And, we look forward to continuing to build upon their leadership, as we transition to a full time administrator for grades K-12.

We also continue to have a great need for high school teachers, with a need focused in Business and Technology, English, Foreign Language, Mathematics, Religion and Science. We are excited to welcome to our high school staff Melanie Hanko (began teaching this past semester), for the 2023/2024 school year. If you are interested, or know of a qualified individual, please encourage them to apply. If you have a background of knowledge in any of the areas described and possess the aptitude and qualities necessary to teach, the Board strongly encourages you to consider coming forward and contributing to our youth, whether full or part time.

The Endowment Fund Committee again expresses their thanks to those who contributed to the Endowment Fund during the past season. The current balance is over 1.2 million dollars. The Committee requests you consider including the Endowment Fund as part of your estate plan, such as by naming the Endowment Fund as a beneficiary under your will or trust. Your gifts – and the interest gained thereby, will benefit our school and the parents and students, by helping to reduce the costs of providing Christian education.

The Progress and Promotion Committee thanks all for their support at our recent spring dinner on March 10. Thanks to Mr. Baldwin and the high school choir for an uplifting night of song – and thanks to all for your financial support. Over \$56,000 was raised to help support educational efforts.

Several Committees have recently sent out surveys, seeking input from the Association on a variety of topics. The Transportation Committee has sent a questionnaire as to use of the school busing system. Please assist the Committee in their evaluation, by providing informed responses. The Education Committee has also sent out a Parent Engagement Survey to all parents of current PRCS/HCHS students. The purpose of this survey was to elicit the parents' thoughts, feelings, and attitudes towards the schools and will help provide insight into seeking to ensure the best possible Christ-centered learning environment for our students.

We have previously shared our work on the development and implementation of our schools' policies to safeguard against abuse. We continue to work with GRACE to evaluate our policies and determine if any additional areas exist to develop.

In upcoming months, look for information for 2023 summer camps which we hope to offer for students in grade and middle school. Opportunities to help lead and assist with camp development will be available – thanks in advance for your assistance!

With the fiscal year ending July 31, 2023, the Finance Committee notes \$159,000 of the \$198,000 budgeted amount has been collected. We give thanks to all for contributions and continued financial support and we thank God for the financial upholding of our school. Although we are approaching the budgeted income of \$198,000 for collections, the need still remains to offset future tuition increases. Please continue to keep our school in mind for future donations and may we all be humbled by the grace that the Lord continues to show to all of us.

And, speaking of pausing and working together, a frozen pipe bursting above the west end of school provided an opportunity for many men to work together on Christmas Eve to harvest the spilled water. Much thanks to the men who took time away from family that evening to help stem the flood and ensure school could be operational in time after the Break!

Not only in the classroom, but on the robotics floor and on the hardwood our students have been hard at work. Congrats to the JV and Varsity Boys with exciting wins over Parkview Christian Academy and a hard fought victory in the first round at the overnight Quentin Road tournament. And, congrats to the Varsity Girls with a recent exciting win over Illiana Christian (on the road!) and a Christian school state championship in the past weeks.

After eleven coaching seasons, Scott VanderGriend is retiring from coaching the men's basketball team. Much thanks to Scott for his coaching efforts and enabling all the fans to enjoy great basketball over the course of the past eleven years!

As we continue in this next semester, we encourage you to communicate with the teachers, administrators and board as we endeavor alongside you, the Association, in offering a rigorous and Reformed education for our youth. In this communication/collaboration, "let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." (Phil 2:3).

HCHS STUDENT COUNCIL HOSTS BABY SHOWER FOR EXPECTANT TEACHERS

On Thursday, February 18, the HCHS student council threw a baby shower. We celebrated the gift of children given by God to Mrs. Sydney Gagliardi (who taught American Literature, Spanish I, Composition, and Grammar) and Mrs. Teagan Van Overloop (who taught Web Design and Computer Applications). The high school students and staff enjoyed orange chicken and fried rice from Panda Express while the teachers (expectant mothers) opened their gifts, ranging from pack-n-plays to baby clothes. We congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Gagliardi in the safe delivery of a baby boy, Calvin Louis on March 11. We anticipate the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Van Overloop's child in late April, beginning of May. Thanks to all who gave financially so the student council could purchase gifts for these expectant mothers.

-Lauryn Van Overloop



ENGLISH COMPOSITION ESSAYS

We've decided to include several essays from Mrs. Gagliardi's sophomore English Composition class. Students worked on their grammar and writing skills by drafting, editing, and composing essays about their grandparents. We thank the following students (and their grandpas) for being willing to share their essays in the *Reflector*.

Grandpa Bill

My grandpa is a very funny person. He always makes you laugh, and he can be a very emotional person. He is a very hardworking man, who has seen a lot in his time. One of the most important things about him is his ability to smile in any circumstance.

My grandpa is from Illinois, and now lives on Lake Dale in Crown Point, Indiana. He is seventy-five years old and has been married to my Grandma Anita for fifty-five years. They are a very nice old couple and they have the perfect house for all their children and grandchildren to visit.

My Grandpa was born into a family of eight. He had six brothers and one sister. His oldest brother Henry died when he was forty-four years old, and his only sister Cory died when she was around sixty-six. His remaining brothers are Adrian, Leonard, Jack, Bob, and Jim. He has six children: Michelle, Rachel, Gregory, Brian, Melissa, Allison.

"We have 6 kids, 2 boys and 4 girls " Please don't ask me their ages."

My Grandpa loves to golf, travel, read mysteries, and watch sports.

"Oh yeah we've been to pretty much over the whole continental United States, and Canada as well."

Grandpa Bill has two jobs right now, even though he claims he's "semi-retired". He works at Yesterday, and Rob's Meats. He has grown up working in the meat department for his whole life. As a high-schooler, he began working for Walt's stocking meat. He eventually made his way up to the butchery, where he would work for most of his life. He is one of those people that just can't do nothing and sit there, he always has to be doing something. My mother gets that trait from him.

When it comes to his growing up, he told me that it was a lot different back then. When I asked him if there were big changes in the world today than from when he was younger he told me this: "Yes, our country is going in a very bad direction right now with recent decisions especially in the social realm. Back then there wasn't as much opportunity to involve ourselves in as many activities as what young people do today, we lived closer-to-home lives, and I started working at a younger age (14) part time." Today, you have to be sixteen in most places to obtain a job, and the young people's society gathers often, and has many fundraisers and get-togethers.

Grandpa Bill played a bit of sports back in the day, consisting only of baseball. He grew up in a Dutch Reformed church that his parents had attended all their life. While working in the meat department, he often received good recipes from customers, but he gave more than he received. I asked him if he liked his job and bosses over the years, to which he replied, "I think that for the most part of the job that I had for 55 years, I think for the bulk of it my bosses were someone tough but fair." He was a social person and the best part of his job was that he got to engage with the customers.

One of my Grandpa's favorite things, if not the favorite, is his family. He has an abundance of grandchildren, and even now some great grandchildren. He loves to have us over on the holidays, or just for Sunday dinners. He always gets choked up in his prayers talking about his family, and you can tell he's very happy with what God has given him.

He told me that if he had to choose a passage that stuck out to him it would have to be Psalm 23 because it is very comforting to him. It gives him assurance in God, and I'm thankful to have a godly grandfather like Grandpa Bill.

-Alex Ophoff

Grandpa Brummel

“It was very difficult to maintain a strong faith in Vietnam. Especially when there weren't really any other so-called Christians you could be close to. If you went to chapel, the army chaplain was really shallow,” said my grandpa, Allen Ray Brummel. At the age of seventy six, he’s had quite a life.

My grandpa was born on January 1, 1946, in Hull, Iowa, to Joe and Tillie Brummel. At the young age of three, my grandpa and his family moved about an hour north to Edgerton, Minnesota. His father was a farmer, and he spent all of his youth on a farm. When asked about his childhood, my grandpa stated, “We always had farm chores growing up on a farm. We never played with others – only with our siblings. We were definitely somewhat family-centered. My brother and I were always adventurous. I always loved to read in my free time.” This quote shows quite a lot about how different life was back then compared to today where everyone just sits around on electronics in their free time.

With regards to school and church, my grandpa has been going to Edgerton Protestant Reformed Church ever since he was a young boy. He remembers the catechism classes would be quite strict, and they wouldn’t play games like we would when we were younger. I also asked my grandpa about high school. He told me that he dropped out after the second year because he did not like it very much. My grandpa would much rather just work on the farm. When asked why he dropped out, my grandpa responded, “I was too shy at the time, so I really didn't like school. I didn't study hard either, and so I would get nervous and sick.” He worked on the farm for a couple of years. But one day, a drastic event happened that would change his life forever.

In 1955, across the globe, the Vietnam War was taking place. All around America, young men were receiving the letter to get drafted. On October 26, 1965, my grandpa received that fateful note from the U.S. Army. The letter told him that he was to travel to the Pipestone Armory and take a bus to the training grounds. This was a life-changing moment. I asked him how he felt about receiving the letter. My grandpa said, “It was the letter that most young men were trying to avoid. Their mothers especially wouldn’t want to see it.” He traveled to the armory and went through with training. He then was sent to Vietnam.

In Vietnam, my grandpa did whatever the army leaders would command him to do. He was chosen to be a radio technician, which was an honor, and he helped fix army equipment. Being across the globe in a different country made it very difficult to maintain a strong faith. He didn’t really have many others he could fellowship closely with. There were chapels, but my grandpa recalls that the chaplain would be a Jewish Rabbi, a Roman Catholic bishop, or a Reformed minister, and men of all religions would go. This really shows how difficult it was to hear the true word of God preached. A couple years later, the war finally ended, and the soldiers returned to America.

After they returned, life was very difficult. The public people hated that the U.S. government and the soldiers had entered the war in the first place. But in the small town of Edgerton, he was welcomed back. He made Confession of Faith and got married to Sharon Ann Kuiper, a teacher in the small Edgerton Free Christian School, in 1968. My grandpa also finished high school. He took the standardized test and got his high school diploma from a public school nearby. Since then, he has been very busy. He has had over six jobs, from owning Brummel’s Sewing and Shoes for thirty eight years, to even being a EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) volunteer for twenty years. He has also had five children who grew up and moved to Iowa, Michigan, and Indiana. Years later, he now has thirty-five grandchildren, and enjoys hunting, fishing, and shooting at the range for fun.

-Derek Van Baren



Grandpa Dykstra

“All my life I wanted to be a teacher, not a minister. When I was younger, some ministers and elders encouraged me to be a minister, but I did not want to be a minister.” Prof. Dykstra, who is my grandpa, was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1954 to Arnold and Donna.

He went to Hope PRC in Michigan when he was younger and had a lot of family there. While he was at Hope Church, he had Prof. Hanko, Rev. Kortering, and Rev. Van Overloop as ministers. During his school days the teachers were a lot stricter. They would even drill in case they would get bombed by Russia, in which case they had to get under their desks. While he was young, he had good, godly parents, grandparents, and a wife who helped his faith. Also, he had back surgery when he was fifteen and had to stay in his bed for three months. While he was in his bed, he learned patience. Prof. Dykstra also had a close friend that was killed in a motorcycle accident. This taught him that he could not expect a long life and that God is in control. Prof. Dykstra got married to Carol Looyenga at the age of nineteen. He had nine children, who are Heather, Heidi, Chris, Ryan, Nathan, Jordan, Emily, Courtney, and Holly.

After Prof. Dykstra went to college, he became a teacher at Hull PRC in Iowa. He taught grades six through eight. He taught at Hull for four years. While he was teaching, the church in Iowa was having some trouble in the church especially with the minister. “That made me see how important the ministry is for God’s people. Gradually, I began to desire to study the Bible more, and God convicted me that I must seek the ministry.”

My grandpa then went to the seminary. At the seminary, he was taught by one of his former ministers, Prof. Hanko. Prof. Hanko was one of my grandpa’s biggest influences while he was learning in the seminary. While Prof. Dykstra was at the seminary, he spent many long hours studying. He made sermons that were then criticized by his professors. He also had to memorize loads of definitions and Bible verses. But, he still enjoyed going through the seminary. He graduated from the seminary when he was thirty-two years old.

He became the pastor of Doon Protestant Reformed Church. While my grandpa was a pastor for Doon, he enjoyed making sermons and teaching catechism. He then became a pastor at Hope (Walker, Michigan).

Then, in 1996, he became a professor at the seminary. When he was a professor, he read and studied many books and pamphlets of other church fathers and professors. He also had to do a lot of denominational work. He had to make sermons for other churches who did not have a minister. He enjoyed teaching the young men and seeing them grow and develop. While he was a professor, he engaged in a lot of mission work. On the mission field, he had to give speeches and sermons to an audience of people who are very different from those in the United States. Some knew the Bible well, and some did not have a clue what it was about. The people had many different backgrounds and ideas of life.

In 2022, my grandpa retired from the seminary, but he did not retire from all the work of the church. He became a pastor of Byron Center in Michigan. This is a lot busier for him with making sermons and teaching catechism, but he still finds time to do some of his hobbies. His hobbies are reading, walking with his wife, and biking.

He now lives with his wife in the Byron Center parsonage. He has forty-two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He taught in the seminary and is also a preacher. So, he was able to be both a teacher and a preacher.

-Tyler Dykstra



HCHS GIRLS BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS

For the third year in a row, the varsity girls basketball team won the Indiana Christian School Athletic Association state championship. To get to the championship game, the girls first played Calumet Christian in the regional championship, whom they beat 59-24. On Saturday, March 4, the girls played their semifinal game against Tabernacle Christian. This is the same team that the Defenders played in the state championship game the previous two years. The team was ready to go by 10:30 in the morning when the game began. Tabernacle scored a quick layup after the tip-off, followed by a corner three from Kenzie Dykstra to answer. The HCHS girls gained a considerable lead in the first quarter, which they were able to hold throughout the game. The Defenders continued to have many steals and transition points, with deep outside shots pouring in as well. This was an entertaining game that consisted of lots of scoring from both teams. The Defenders defeated Tabernacle Christian 82-56.

The state final game began at 6pm versus Granger Christian. The girls all had a nervous excitement about them before the start of the game. The game started off a little slow from both teams, but after the first half the Defenders knew they would win. Shots started falling more in the second half, with the highlight being Tori Haak's midrange buzzer-beater at the end of the third quarter. The Defenders defeated Granger Christian 47-24. As the team left the building, the girls dumped all the water from their water bottles onto Coach Dykstra to celebrate being three-time state champions!

- Lexi Lenting



SUMMER CAMPS AHEAD

This summer, look for opportunities for Summer Camps for students in Grades 2 – 8. Camp information and scheduling is still being assembled, but look for registration soon for Summer Camps for the following: 1) Ukelele Camp; 2) Robotics; 3) Arts & Crafts; 4) Home Economics; 5) Water Colors; and 6) Fishing and Outdoor Adventures.

Camp sizes will vary and be offered in either the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th week of July. Registration forms are anticipated to be sent out in late April.

2023 / 2024 SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school board has approved the 2023/2024 school academic calendar. This can be found on our school's website. When reviewing this calendar, please note several rather large changes to this school calendar when compared with current and past school calendars.

- 1) School starts two weeks before Labor Day
- 2) We are no longer taking school off for a Record's Day in October nor in January.
- 3) HCHS exams occur before Christmas Break
- 4) We included a long 4-day weekend in February, our new Winter Break.
- 5) Our Spring Break has been extended to include having no school on the Friday before Spring Break.

August 21	First Day of School	January 8	School Resumes
September 1,4	Labor Day Weekend	February 16, 19	Winter Break
October 18-20	PRTI Convention (18th; half day of school)	March 29	No School (Friday before Spring Break)
November 22-24	Thanksgiving Break (22nd: half day of school)	April 1-5	Spring Break
December 20-22	HCHS Exams	May 21-23	HCHS Exams
December 21	PRCS Christmas Program	May 23	Graduation (half day)
December 22	Half day of school	May 27	Memorial Day
Dec 25-Jan 5	Christmas Break		

BOYS BASKETBALL / THANK YOU

For first year coach Ryan Zandstra, his goal for the JV men's basketball season was "to play smart and work hard." After the final buzzer, the JV squad had achieved a 16-6 record, with highlights and favorite game memories being created after beating Hammond Baptist twice and coming from behind to beat Kankakee Trinity. "Most enjoyable though" reflected Zandstra "was getting to know these young men. It was great to see them rooting for each other to get better, both in practice and during games."

After his eleventh season of coaching the Varsity men's basketball team, Scott VanDerGriend recently announced he would be stepping back from coaching. "Overall" he reflected, "I'm extremely grateful. I've been able to work with great families and great players to coach – very fortunate to have been able to coach these young men both in life and in basketball."

The Varsity men's squad achieved a 16-14 record this past season, while topping the highlight reel was beating Hammond Baptist at the buzzer. "We lost our regional championship game," said VanDerGriend, "but as a team we had a lot of fun this past season. This group was always upbeat and positive, a lot of fun to coach."

Graduating this year were seniors Noah Lenting, Silas Van Baren, and Brayden Dykstra.

Much thanks to Scott for his efforts and significant contributions to the athletics program in the past decade – they are much appreciated!

-Nathan Vis