

PINECREST HEADLINES

Communication from the Head of School – Issue 7, 2008-09 – Wednesday, December 10, 2008

News and Notes

Thursday, December 18, is the last day of school before the winter break. There is no school and no bus service on Friday, December 19. Instead, the children will present their winter music concert, at 9:15 a.m., at John Calvin Presbyterian Church on Columbia Pike in Annandale. Please see today's Wednesday Envelope for more information. All children need to arrive at the church by 9 a.m.

This is my first newsletter since our accreditation quality assurance review in November. To recap, I am very proud and pleased that Pinecrest School has been recommended for full accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI)! This opens up many new doors for the school, but, just as important, also recognizes and celebrates the many positive and special features of our school, faculty and staff, curriculum, community, and more. More information and feedback from the quality assurance visit will be shared with all once we receive official word from the accreditation group. In the meantime, I hope you feel pride too – this is something that belongs to all of us! What an exciting time to be part of the Pinecrest School community!

On Wednesday, January 14, at 7 p.m., we will have our 2009-10 Back-to-School Night, beginning in the multipurpose room. This is a parents-only event for parents of rising preschool 4 through grade 6 students to learn more about their child's next grade level. For example, if your child is currently in the four-year-old preschool class, you would go to the kindergarten classroom for the presentation, and so on.) The format will be very similar to the Back-to-School Night we have in the fall (thus the name of the event). Teachers will make presentations and answer questions. Board members will share information as well. I hope you'll plan on attending – please save the date and reserve your baby-sitters now!

Our annual International Dinner will be held on Saturday evening, January 10, at school in the multipurpose room. More information to follow soon.

Please note the following calendar change: Our spring K-6 Movie Night will be held on Friday, May 15 (not on May 8, as the calendar indicates). This was a planning error on my part – we cannot have the book fair and a movie night taking place at the same time in the same space – OOPS! Thanks for your understanding.

Last week, our preschool classes went to Woodson High School for Holiday Tunes for Tots concerts. Thank you to Jody Gamber (parent of Emily, Preschool 3), Phuong Ly (parent of Caila Kooc, Preschool 4), Jim Vu (parent of Nathan, Preschool 4) for joining Mrs. Ferrier, Mrs. Mink, Mrs. Narcisso, and Mrs. Wool-Lewis on the trips.

Also last week, Ms. Bleggi and the third graders went to Green Springs Gardens in Alexandria for a soil presentation to complement their science studies. Thank you to Susan Akers (parent of Ellie Hohenstein, grade 3) and Marina Sutton (parent of Lauren, grade 3) for driving and chaperoning!

Next week, Ms. Bleggi and Mrs. Davis will attend a workshop in McLean about word study – “Using Word Study to Build Phonics, Spelling, and Vocabulary Skills.”

To paraphrase the message from Susan Akers, fundraising chair on the Board of Trustees: We are now beginning our Annual Fund Campaign, and we kick it off with 100% Board participation. We hope that you will consider donating in an amount that fits within your family's means, as well. Our goal is 100% parent and staff participation. All independent schools and non-profits run Annual Fund Campaigns each year. Your gift helps strengthen and uphold our mission for our current and future students.

If you read this newsletter, please email me by Friday morning at 10 a.m. and your family will be entered to win second row seats at our winter concert on December 19! (Front row seats go to the highest bidder from last year's auction.) One winner will be drawn randomly from those who respond. Congratulations to Nicholas Boyer (grade 3) who won complimentary admission to Movie Night because his parents responded to the last newsletter contest!

News and Notes – continued

Pinecrest Summer Pavilion 2009 information will be available in January. Camp information packets will be distributed to current Pinecrest families first, before information is mailed to last year's camp families or put on the school website. Stay tuned for exciting news about another great summer! ☺

Please remember to dress your child for the weather now that it has gotten chillier. All classes play outside everyday that the temperature is above 32 degrees Fahrenheit (and not raining or snowing). A warm coat is mandatory every day until spring.

A reminder about our online shopping fundraisers, especially in the season of giving: www.schoolpop.com and www.giveline.com. Both of these websites act as online shopping portals that, once you have registered and designated Pinecrest, will give a portion of dollars you spend on purchases on these websites back to Pinecrest. The school just received a check for \$56.51 for recent contributions from SchoolPop. Thank you to all who use these portals for online shopping!

There will be a winter session of K-6 after-school activities. More information will be distributed to families after the winter break.

School Policy Highlight

Thanks to a suggestion from a Board Trustee, this will be a new recurring section (space permitting) where I will highlight a random school policy for your information. We hope you find it helpful! ☺ From page 10 of the Community Handbook: *Late Tuition Payments – A \$25.00 late payment fee will be charged if payment is not received by the 5th of each month. An additional fee of \$50.00 will be assessed after 30 days. Please mail checks to the office or place the check in an envelope and have an adult hand-carry it to the office. Please do not give checks to the teacher(s) on kiss-and-ride duty.*

Upcoming Dates

Fri., Dec. 19	NO SCHOOL – All-school Winter Concert – 9:15 a.m. – John Calvin Church
Mon.-Fri., Dec. 22-Jan. 2	Winter Break – NO SCHOOL (includes New Year's Day Holiday)
Mon., Jan. 5	School Resumes
Tues., Jan. 6	Board of Trustees Meeting – 7 p.m. – science/art lab
Sat., Jan. 10	International Dinner – 6 p.m. – multipurpose room
Sun., Jan. 11	Open House for Prospective Families – 1-4 p.m.
Wed., Jan. 14	2009-10 Back-to-School Night–7 p.m.– begins in multipurpose room (For parents of rising Preschool 4 – Grade 6 students to learn more about their child's <u>next</u> grade level)
Wed., Jan. 21	2008-09 Reenrollment Forms Distributed
Mon., Jan. 19	Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday Holiday – NO SCHOOL
Tues., Jan. 20	Inauguration Day – NO SCHOOL
Fri., Jan. 23	Quarter 2 Ends (43 days)
Mon., Jan. 26	Faculty In-Service Workday – NO SCHOOL
Tues., Jan. 27	Quarter 3 Begins
Wed., Jan. 28	Quarter 2 Report Cards Distributed Via Wednesday Envelopes
Tues., Feb. 3	Board of Trustees Meeting – 7 p.m. – science/art lab
Fri., Feb. 6	Grade 1 Assembly – 9:15 a.m. – multipurpose room

Celebrations/Appreciations

Bravo to our third grade class and Ms. Bleggi for their fun and well-performed Thanksgiving-themed assembly on November 21! offer my heartfelt appreciation to all who participated in our first-ever K-6 Thanksgiving Feast

whether by donating or bringing a prepared item. What a unique opportunity for all of us to come together and share a meal. We really had a wonderful time. Thank you to the parents who helped on-site with us that day – Mohamoud Ali, Madelynn Arnold, Lei Bao, Denise Boyer, Vicky Carmody, Brenda Neil, Nguyen Nguyen, Teresa Rowe (and her parents!), Trisha Serven, Marina Sutton (and her mother-in-law!), Val Treharne, and Scott & Fifi Tucker (and Manny!). We could not have done it without you – many thanks for your time!

Many thanks to all of the preschool families who contributed food items and volunteer time to the annual Preschool Thanksgiving Feast as well! I stopped in and our little pilgrims and Indians were having a blast!

A tip of the hat to the many parents and families who are visiting classes to share holiday traditions and customs with us this month. We appreciate the diverse culture of our community and love opportunities to learn more from among our own. Special thanks again to the family of Aleyna Yozgat (grade 1) for providing lunch for all today to celebrate Eid.

A standing ovation for Scott Pratt (friend of Ms. Tamayo and Mrs. Vogus), who, as always, graciously supplied the equipment and popcorn machine for our recent Movie Night. And, special thanks to Ms. Tamayo for chaperoning with me!

Happy Belated Birthday to Mrs. Yeomans (December 2) and Happy Early Birthday to Mrs. Samaha (December 26)!

Congratulations to the family of Garrett Patterson (grade 2) who is the first recipient of our new student referral tuition credit (a.k.a. "recruiting bonus!"), an initiative of the 2008-09 Board of Trustees!

Thought for the Day

"Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take,
but by the moments that take our breath away."
(Robert Frost)