

NICHOLSON CATHOLIC COLLEGE

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Student Engagement a Focus for School Improvement

Students at Nicholson Catholic College are demonstrating high levels of achievement and are finding success after graduation in Apprenticeships, Colleges and Universities in numbers beyond their peers provincially in keeping with the efficacy of Catholic education (Colleges Ontario Study, King & Warren). Our graduation rates, credit accumulation data and achievement data are monitored continuously so that we can make informed decisions about how to best serve our students. This is the heart of school improvement planning, a process formally documented each year to communicate our priorities in refining instruction and programs to better meet the needs of our students.

Currently at Nicholson, ‘Critical Literacy’ and ‘Higher Order Thinking’ integration are key instructional strategies which all teachers are embedding in their programs in order to achieve our goal of greater student engagement. Professor Garfield Gini-Newman from U of T, an expert in this area, facilitated a day of Professional Development for all instructional staff in October. By challenging students to analyze, hypothesize and think creatively they are drawn more deeply into the learning context and develop skills to manage and manipulate information critically.

Other strategies in our School Improvement Plan include innovation in interactive math instruction with the purchase of Smartboards for all math classrooms. A Ministry of Education trained math coach has been working with our math Department to support their work in this area. Dynamic classrooms and the most extensive offerings of clubs, teams and extra-curricular experiences for students make Nicholson a Catholic high school where every student can thrive and grow. For more information about our goals and strategies as well as progress updates please see the School Improvement Plan on our School Website.

NCC Newsletter—What’s Inside....

Once again, as an Eco School, we wish to reduce our paper usage so we are offering our School Newsletter on-line. To access the rest of this information, please visit: www.nccschool.org or call the school to obtain a paper copy.



Other articles included in our newsletter:

Guidance News	2
Student Success	3
Transition to High School.....	3
Homestay Opportunity	3
Chaplaincy News	4
Jamaica Mission Trip	4
NCC Tech TV and 100.9 Tower FM	5
Music Department News	5
International Baccalaureate Programme	5
Astronomy Club News	5
Little NBA Registration.....	5
Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program	6
Information for Graduating Students	6
Student Council News.....	7
Food for Learning Program	7
Important Dates	7

GUIDANCE NEWS

FEBRUARY 2010

Course Selection and Registration for the 2010 – 2011 School Year (yes already)

Our upcoming course selection time is an extremely important time of the year. The decisions that students make now about their courses for next year will have an impact on future careers and postsecondary plans. Since staffing and the master timetable for the school are based on courses that students select in February and March, it is very important for students to choose wisely. While we do our best to accommodate students, changes are not always possible at a later date because classes are full and the timetable is set.

Grade 8 students have completed their orientation visits to Nicholson and we are excited to see so many bright and enthusiastic students make their choice, Nicholson Catholic College. Grade 8 course selections started in January with the Grade 9 Guidance Counsellor, Ms Christa Ray, visiting our four associated Catholic Elementary Schools. Nicholson invites students from the area, who do not attend Catholic Elementary Schools, to call the school to find out about how to register for September 2010.

For our Grades 9, 10, 11 and returning Grade 12 students, the course selection process will start Feb 9th with Grade Meetings. Students will receive only course descriptions and personalized course selection sheets related to their grade. Nicholson is going electronic with the formal Course Calendar for 2010/2011. The complete Course Calendar can now be viewed via the link on the school webpage, www.nccschool.org. We can make the Course Calendar for 2010/2011 available on disk for those who do not have Internet access. The resulting reduction in paper used will contribute to Nicholson's efforts to reduce our environmental footprint and our efforts to be recognized as an 'ECO School'.

The course selections process is as follows:

1. Grade Class visits scheduled Feb 9th to 19th.
2. Guidance Counsellors visit classes for Q & A, instruction, and solving simple queries.
3. Counsellors are available to all students and parents at any time, to discuss course options that fit student post secondary plans.
4. Parents and guardians are requested to sign and return course selection sheets before Feb 19th. Students will be entering their choices directly into the computer between Feb 22nd and Feb 26th
5. During the March to June time period, staff are checking entries and using student course choices to predict student number, staffing requirements, course assignments, and then eventually create individual student timetables, etc.
6. With the midterm report card, a customized mailing takes place to inform all parents/guardians of choices selected by their child, thus ensuring all are informed and any errors are identified and corrected.

Pathways for All

We are making a concerted effort to honour the direction of all our students. Initiatives have been undertaken to support students who are heading directly to the world of work after high school, for those seeking apprenticeships, for others heading off to community colleges, and for those pursuing university study. Pathways brochures are available in the Guidance office.



“ENLIGHTENED BY KNOWLEDGE...ENRICHED BY FAITH”

Student Success

Whew! We made it! Semester 1 is now complete and we are all ready and eager to start again. This is a good opportunity to remind everyone of the role Student Success plays here at Nicholson.

It is our hope that all students achieve success in their credit accumulation. At times this becomes problematic for many students. Early recognition of a problem is far more proactive than anything else. Once a student has been recognized as “at risk” (due to absenteeism, academic concerns, emotional/stress concerns, etc.) our Student Success Team begins working with the individual to provide support for the student.

The Student Success Room is open several periods a day so that students have access to a quiet workplace where they will receive one on one support if needed. **The room is also open at lunch** throughout the week for students who would like to work on assignments, use computers or complete homework.

Students are met individually to ascertain what type of strategies would work best given the situation. Often we will meet with parents and teachers to ensure that everyone is aware of the plan. Once

the plan is put into place, the student is monitored throughout the semester.

Student Success is much larger than it may appear. Here’s a look at some of the other things we offer:

- ◆ an After School Literacy Program for students who wish to prepare for the OSSLT
- ◆ an After School Numeracy Program for those students preparing for the EQAO Math assessment
- ◆ peer tutoring support
- ◆ a concrete Transition Plan for elementary students entering secondary school
- ◆ peer mentors who help not only with the transition process to high school but also with issues that students face everyday.

Student Success will continue to grow and evolve. Feel free to contact Mrs. Barrett or the school should you ever have any concerns or questions.



Transition to High School

The transition from elementary to high school is in full swing. Ms. Ray, the grade 9 guidance counselor, has made recent visits to Our Lady of Fatima, St. Michael's, St. Joseph's and St. Gregory's. Students were provided with comprehensive registration packages and the process of course selection was the main topic of conversation. All parents and students are invited to attend a **Grade 8 Parent Information Night on Wednesday February 10th, 2010** starting at 6:30 pm to learn more. The presentation will last approximately one hour and will address course selection items such as appropriate pathway choices and special programmes (such as International Baccalaureate and Extended French) offered at NCC. Anyone is welcome to attend, so please invite friends or family that may have a son or daughter entering high school in September 2010.

Homestay Opportunity

The Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board will be receiving International Students for classes commencing September 2010 at Nicholson Catholic College. We are looking for homestays for these students. In particular we are looking for a vegetarian/vegan family to host a boy from Japan. If you are interested in providing a home for this student or any other International Student or would like more information on remuneration, etc., please call Madeleine O'Connor at 1-800-581-1116 X 474 or e-mail oonorm@alcdsb.on.ca.



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Chaplaincy News—February 2010

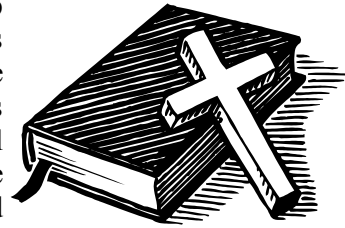
By Jo Belanger

During January, as second term of Semester One wound down, The Chaplaincy Office was quieter than normal. However as Semester Two gears up so too, will our activity. We will resume holding retreats for our students. We will prepare for Lent beginning with a school Mass on Ash Wednesday which falls on February 17th this year. We will respond as a school community, not only to the Social Justice projects that we have already committed to – Tlama Clean Water Project in Mexico and Buy a Net for Uganda, but also to the people of Haiti who have suffered so much these past few weeks.

I have assembled a display outside of the Chaplaincy Office to honour the Year of the Priesthood. The focal point of the display is a beautiful icon of Jesus the Teacher which will be hung in the library afterwards. We continue to pray as a community for vocations and look forward to our Vocations Day (March 10) when we will welcome seminarian Kevin McDonald to Nicholson to speak to our students.

Our partnership with the St. Mike's Youth Ministry Office will gear up as well this semester. Students will be invited to participate in Thinkfast at the end of March as a fundraiser for Development and Peace's Share Lent program. Marilyn and Silvana from the Youth Office will take the lead in the programming this year and Father Brennan and I will provide back-up support. As well they will invite our students to participate as actors in the Stations of the Cross which will be presented on Holy Thursday morning here at Nicholson.

Please keep in your prayers, the success of second semester and the safe return of our students who will be travelling over March Break to Jamaica for a Service trip and to Spain and Morocco for a History trip.



Jamaica Mission Trip

A group of students and teachers from Nicholson Catholic College are going to Kingston Jamaica on a Mission Trip, along with our chaplain Father Brennan. We will have the opportunity to do a number of activities that assist the good people of Jamaica. We will be working in **community outreach projects, peer education projects and in general house improvement and refurbishing.**

This is an exciting opportunity and we are confident that our team will make a real impact, coming to understand fully our potential as modern prophets, willing and able to make a difference in the world.

We have held several fundraisers to date: chocolate sales, a raffle and a dinner. We would sincerely like to extend a heartfelt thanks to those who have so generously supported our initiatives. The winner of the Outdoor Shed was K. Petto – Congratulations!

The week of February 22nd through to the 26th will be our final initiative. During this week we will hold a **'build a school with school supplies' and 'build a hospital with medical supplies' drive.** Our goal will be to collect from the student and parent community the following items: back packs, pens, pencils, paper, notebooks, children's books, crayons, markers, bandages, gauze, tubing, medical tape, medical scissors, first aid kits, blankets, latex gloves, soap, polysporin ointment, swabs, peroxide, hand sanitizer, etc. (new items only please). From these items we will construct two structures on the cafeteria stage for students to see their progress. Any and all donations to this worthwhile cause will be greatly appreciated. It is important to note that all medical supplies provided at this time will actually be benefiting Haitian relief, as Jamaica has set up medical support for their neighbour.

If you feel that you would be able to contribute financially to our Mission Trip we would be very grateful. Any cheque can be made payable to Nicholson Catholic College. You may deliver your donation to NCC (main office, attention Jamaica Mission Trip) or feel free to contact Charlene Landry-Kyte, Meaghan Woodland or Father Brent Brennan.

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NCC Tech TV and 100.9 Tower FM are on the air!



Beginning in semester two, Mr. McGlynn's Grade 12 Communications Technology class will once again be broadcasting their weekly television news program, *NCC Tech TV* on Cogeco channel 4. Tune into Cogeco for dates and times.

100.9 Tower FM will also be returning to the radio airwaves. *Tower FM* broadcasts to the school community every day over lunch hour with a mix of music, chat, news, interviews and commentaries. Check it out!



The International Baccalaureate Programme

As part of the International Baccalaureate Programme, diploma students are required to complete 150 hours of CAS; an acronym for Creativity, Action and Service. *The philosophy of CAS is to educate the whole person, to develop an awareness of and concern for others, to promote community and international understanding, to acquire new skills and interests, to complement the academic curriculum, and to extend education beyond the classroom.* This diploma expectation compliments our school's ministry to Catholic Education. The IB diploma student, therefore, is able to reflect upon the meaningful time they spend on sports teams, clubs, extra curricular activities, etc. It is very important that the IB student remain well-rounded and participate in the culture of their school and local agencies / organizations.

The spirit of CAS encourages students to engage in activities which are worthwhile and purposeful to their community; therefore, things like Christmas sharing, fundraising and school initiatives like recycling / eco team can count toward their hours. The accrue-ment of CAS hours is not a daunting task when you consider all that our children do. **If you run an organization, or are familiar with one, that could use the support of young volunteers please consider contacting me at the number listed below.** We look forward to building opportunities for our students as well as providing service to our community.

Charlene Landry-Kyte
IB Coordinator
 (613) 967 – 0404 x233

Music Department News

A big "Thank You" to all of the guests who attended the grade 9 Winter Concert in December. The students had a great time and enjoyed performing for you. The Music Department will begin preparations very soon for the Spring Concert on Thursday, May 27, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Providence Gym. Parents and interested guests of the students in the grade 10, 11 and 12 music classes are invited to attend.



These students will also be involved with preparing music for Nicholson's Awards Night in collaboration with the NCC Band.



The grade 10 guitar course, which is a beginners class, will be working towards an in-class Coffee House on May 26, 2010.

Astronomy Club News

NCC's new Astronomy Club is off to a great start! Thanks to a variety of fundraising activities, the club purchased a new, hi-tech telescope for NCC. The telescope provides incredible views of Jupiter, Saturn and Mars, as well as deep space objects like nebulae and galaxies. The Astronomy Club is now in the process of organizing evening star parties where members will gather together to explore the wonders of the night sky. New members are always welcome! See Mr. McGlynn for details.

Little NBA

The Little NBA Basketball League will be holding registration nights on Monday, February 8th and Monday, February 22nd from 5:00 PM until 7:00 PM at Nicholson. Please use the John Street entrance.

This league is comprised of a Grade 6/7 coed division and a Grade 8/9 boys only division. The cost is \$60 and the schedule consists of ten games, beginning in mid-March and ending in mid-May. For more information, please contact Tim Coates at the school.



Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

‘SKILLED TRADES’ - A CAREER YOU CAN BUILD ON!

The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) has been profiled as one of the pathways that is making significant gains in providing career opportunities for students. OYAP is a school-to-work transition program offered throughout all of Ontario’s secondary schools. Full time students in grades 11 and 12 earn cooperative education credits for their graduation diploma through work placements in skilled trades. Students who are committed to pursuing this option as a career choice may also apply to start an apprenticeship.

How good is your knowledge about the Skilled Trades? Did you know.....

- there are over 150 apprenticeable skilled trades in the province of Ontario?
- a skilled trade is defined as an occupation that requires a specific skill or set of skills?
- an Apprenticeship is an educational process for learning a skilled trade involving “hands-on” training?
- an Apprenticeship is recognized as one of the four post-secondary education pathways offered to students in Ontario schools. (Apprenticeship/College/University/World of Work)?
- senior high school students can start an apprenticeship with the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program while still enrolled in high school?
- OYAP is a School to Work program offered in secondary schools where students complete cooperative education credits in apprenticeship trades?
- starting in semester two, the ALCDSB has over 40 students attending Loyalist College, St. Lawrence College, and the Local 183 Training Centre to receive their first Level of Apprenticeship Training? These Level 1 Apprenticeship Program offerings include Hairstylist, Carpentry, Brick & Stone Mason, Cook, Automotive, Early Childhood Education, and Construction Craft Worker.
- students enrolled in these Level 1 Apprenticeship Programs must be registered as apprentices with an employer?
- the tuition required for OYAP students to attend these college programs is FREE. This tuition is paid for by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities?
- the Conference Board of Canada estimates that Canada will be short one million skilled trade workers by 2020?

Who Should Consider OYAP? - Students who:

- are at least 16 years of age and have completed 16 credits
- are either in grade 11 or 12 and have an interest in a career in a skilled trade

Information about OYAP may be obtained from the guidance department or cooperative education teacher in any of the Board’s high schools. (web information at www.oyap.com)

Additional support or information is available from Jim Johnston or Paul Denison, OYAP Coordinators with the Board. Jim may be reached at (613) 532-3985; Paul may be reached at (613) 849-8550.

Information for Graduating Students

It was a busy fall for graduating students as they completed their post secondary research and applications for September 2010 entry. We have approximately 162 prospective graduating students for June 2010. Of these students, the vast majority have applied to apprenticeship, university and college programs. Our students and parents continue to place a high value on post secondary education. Some students will directly enter the world of work. We are also pleased that more students are expressing an interest in, and researching, skilled trade opportunities. A few students who graduated this past June have completed an extra semester and are planning to work or travel before beginning their studies in September 2010. We wish our departing Semester 1 students all the best and we invite them to stay in touch if we can assist them in any way.

Student Council News

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the successful school dances we have had this semester. The Summer Extravaganza was awesome but even better was the Masquerade Semi. We are also looking forward to a great second semester. Here are a few ideas in the works:

- ◆ Operation Smile
- ◆ Hat Day
- ◆ Spirit Week
- ◆ Random Acts of Kindness Week
- ◆ Guest speakers
- ◆ Lots of neat fundraising ideas
- ◆ Lots of fun.

Thanks again NCC.

NCC 50th Anniversary

Nicholson Catholic College turns 50 this year. There are many exciting activities being planned for the weekend of May 14-16, 2010.

Don't forget to register on-line at www.ncc50th.org.

There will be lots of fun for everyone!



Food for Learning

The Food for Learning Program is very active at NCC feeding 30-40 students every day. All students are welcome to visit Wendi Hudson's room (301) to get a bite to eat and/or support from Wendi our Youth Worker. In this photo, Adam Kurkoski and David McInroy, a couple of student volunteers, help out with lunch along with Ryan, a Loyalist College student. A special thanks goes to David for coordinating the "Snack Baskets" found throughout the school.

Dates to Remember

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Monday, Feb. 8 | — Reports (final marks Sem. 1) are sent home |
| Wednesday, Feb. 10 | — Grade 8 Information Night—6:30 p.m. |
| Monday, Feb. 15 | — Family Day (no school) |
| Tuesday, Feb. 16 | — School Council Meeting—6:30 p.m. |
| Wednesday, Feb. 17 | — Ash Wednesday Mass |
| Friday, Feb. 26 | — Civvies Day |
| Mar. 12-19 | — March Break (inclusive) |
| Tuesday, Mar. 23 | — Early Progress Reports sent home |
| Wednesday, Mar. 31 | — Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences |



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