

## Note from Administration

Following the May long weekend, to celebrate Victoria Day, we enter the home stretch to the school year. We would like to remind and encourage students and parents that the final six weeks of classes and summative finals are a significant time in the school year. Missing class time for non school activities can seriously impact student progress. We ask for parents to assist us in imposing clear expectations of being in class in final weeks of school. We have experienced some students being "signed out" to study other class work. This is not permitted, as we do not have the ability to supervise students who are signed out of school and missing scheduled classes. If your child is signed out of class for illness or reasons deemed by the parent to be a priority at that time, they must leave the school property to attend to that priority. Keeping safety and student success the focus at this time is important to everyone.

We will continue to enjoy many of the year end activities that help celebrate the gifts of every student, including our International Food Festival, COPA arts night, D-8 and CWOSSA athletic playoffs, and our Graduation liturgy and breakfast for our soon to be graduates, among other year end events many which are outlined in BENN. We will enjoy the warm weather and the challenges of finishing off a successful school year together. Go Saints!

- Mr. J. McKinnon, Principal

## Administrative

### STUDENTS WARN TEACHERS ABOUT DANGEROUS CELL PHONE USE

By MR. J. CURTIS

Teachers got a wake-up call recently about enforcing the cell phone policy within the school. Student representatives from W.A.Y.V.E. (Working Against Youth Violence Everywhere) offered teachers a lesson in cell phones, showing how potentially dangerous they can be to the community as some teenagers use the communication devices to buy drugs, spread gossip, and torment students.

During a recent staff meeting, Melanie Henriques and Amanda Conde delivered an impassioned presentation that highlighted the concerns W.A.Y.V.E. has around the use of cell phones. By bringing attention to the few cases of improper cell phone activity in the school, they tried to show teachers how to put a stop to the abuse. They explained in detail the strategies students employ to avoid detection in the hopes that teachers can catch the offenders before they can do any damage.

"We need teachers to be more diligent with the cell phone policy," Miss Henriques pleaded. "You might think text messages don't mean much, but the consequences can be devastating."

Miss Henriques and Miss Conde shared heartfelt stories about how younger students can sometimes get involved in fights, bullying, and drug use through the use of cell phones. "With wireless technology, everything spreads so much faster," explained Miss Henriques. "People can get personal information from someone's Facebook page and use it against them by texting all their friends with nasty comments. Gossip spreads so much faster now because people don't have to wait to be face-to-face anymore."

The W.A.Y.V.E. presentation also showed teachers how some students use cell phones to start fights through electronic taunting. They also use the technology to arrange a time and place to fight. Not only that, with built-in camera phones, students will record the actual fight and post it on the Internet. W.A.Y.V.E. believes that if teachers can intercept the calls within their classrooms and in the hallways by confiscating cell phones, they can prevent unnecessary violence in the school.

---

***We need teachers to be more diligent with the cell phone policy ... You might think text messages don't mean much, but the consequences can be devastating.***

---

The student presenters also shocked teachers with stories about drug use by a small group of students in the school and how these teenagers can buy marijuana using cell phones. According to a recent poll by Project Teen Canada, almost one-third of teens (31%) use marijuana on a regular basis, and Miss Henriques described how these teenagers at our school use a cell phone to order the illegal drug. "If a student wants to get weed (marijuana), they can text a friend first thing in the morning and get it by the end of first period," said Miss Henriques. "It's insane how easy it is, and you teachers have no idea what's going on."

The presentation opened many eyes in the packed lecture hall, including W.A.Y.V.E. teacher-supervisor Mrs. Nada Offak. "When the girls asked us if they could talk to teachers at a staff meeting, we knew it must be serious," said Mrs. Offak. "After listening to them, it's obvious we need to take a hard-line approach to cell phone use or else it's going to destroy all the hard work we've done to make our community a safe place to learn."

In the near future, W.A.Y.V.E. hopes to bring their cautionary message to parents through the School Council. "Parents need to know how wireless technology can get their teenagers into trouble," explained Mrs. Offak. "Parents buy their kids cell phones and pay for the monthly bills, but they need to know what they're paying for. They need to ask what's going on in all those text messages."

Now that students have sent out a warning message about cell phone abuse, it's up to teachers to answer the call.



## ***HOMework CLUB***

**When?** Mondays through Thursdays,  
starting on February 23<sup>rd</sup> (2:30 – 3:30)

**Where?** Room 224

**Who?** Teacher volunteers from all subject  
areas – MATH too!

**Why?** To get help with homework,  
assignments, test preparation, editing essays,  
etc.... (Computer access too!)

**How?** Just show up!

## **CHANGES TO ST. BENEDICT UNIFORM COMING IN SEPTEMBER**

By Mr. J. McKINNON

We would like to announce that we will have a new uniform supplier for September 2009. R.J. McCarthy School Uniforms will be our official school supplier. McCarthy's supplies uniforms to our other 4 secondary schools in the W.C.D.S.B.

McCarthy's is located at 44 Saltsman Drive in Cambridge or you can visit their web site at [www.rjmccarthy.com](http://www.rjmccarthy.com) to register. Entering your contact information will assist with your "Check In" with the receptionist at the store and for future on line purchases.

We will have flyers and promotional information to be distributed with report cards in April.

We would like to thank Marks Work Wearhouse for their support of our community over the past years. They will be selling off the remainder of the Bennies uniform clothing at 50% off until the remaining inventory is depleted.

We will be expecting all Grade 8's to be in McCarthy uniforms. We will permit next years grade 10-12 to wear existing uniforms from Marks, but all future purchase will be from McCarthy's. By September 2010, all students will need to be in McCarthy's uniforms. It is also important to note that the style and uniform expectations will not be changing, except for the addition of a navy blue jacket with B logo to be added for September.

The uniform is an important part of our community culture at Catholic Secondary Schools. Although much has been written about the safety issues it supports, a primary purpose of the uniform is to identify ourselves as a community. The uniform represents a community that shares values and beliefs of a Catholic education. We believe it must be worn with the dignity and respect that our young people deserve in their education.

Thank you for your continued support.

**NEW ST. BENEDICT PRICING AND INFORMATION FROM R.J.MCCARTHY'S IS AVAILABLE IN PDF FORMAT IF YOU [CLICK HERE.](#)**

**ATTENDANCE ISSUES** If your son or daughter is absent from school on a particular day, please try to call the school by noon *that same day*. **The direct phone line for the attendance office is (519) 621-4001.**

**UNIFORMS** As the weather gets nicer, we remind students that non-uniform clothing is not permitted in the classrooms, and should be left in your locker. Pants and shorts are to be wawrn properly, not rolled.

### **HATS AND CELL PHONES: PUT THEM AWAY, OR LOSE FOR A DAY!**

Students are reminded to keep hats and cell phones in their locker during the school day. Hats are not part of the school uniform, so they should not be worn in the school. Cell phones are distracting and hinder student progress, they should be off and put away.

Students who choose to wear hats or use cell phones in the school will have those items confiscated for the day and will be consequenced.

### **WHO IS YOUR ADMINISTRATOR?**

The administrative contact for your son or daughter is based on your last name:

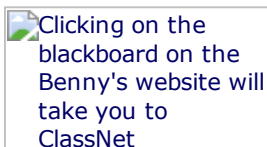
A to F - [Mrs. Daly](#)

G to O - [Mr. Bellini](#)

P to Z - [Mrs. Leusink](#)

As always, feel free to contact our principal, [Mr. McKinnon](#).

## Academic



Clicking on the blackboard on the Benny's website will take you to ClassNet

### **WHAT DO YOU HAVE FOR HOMEWORK? NOTHING?**

Ah, that timeless answer students give to parents... Many of our teachers are posting homework assignments on the board's homework repository, ClassNet. In order to get to ClassNet to check for homework, assignments, or other information for classes your son or daughter has, go to <http://classnet.wcdsb.ca>.

On the Benny's website, simply click on the blackboard in the bottom left corner of the screen and it will take you there.

---

### **WCDSB STUDENT SUCCESS SITE**

<http://bss.wcdsb.ca>

Resources to help you help your son or daughter succeed.

---

## **EQAO MATH TEST INFORMATION....**

MISS C. STOCKIE

All grade 9's enrolled in either Grade 9 Applied or Academic Math classes during semester 2 will be writing the EQAO's provincial Math Test over two days - on Tuesday, June 9th and Wednesday, June 10th. This test will be written during their regularly-scheduled Math class, and will take the full period on both days. It is important that students be prepared for this test, since the EQAO is worth half of their final exam, or 15% of their final, overall mark. Students should already be preparing in their classes by working on practice materials provided by their teacher, but there are also tonnes of on-line resources available to families so that students can practice at home. Just check out the official website: [eqao.com](http://eqao.com) for tests from previous years, complete solutions, tips and reminders, as well as useful links. Lots of luck to all those Grade 9's participating.

**MATH CLUB** Every week ... Tuesdays and Wednesdays, we especially invite students who want to preview and prepare for up-coming math contests. Meet with Dr. Chernysh after school in room 310. See you there!!

## Clubs & Athletics

### **UNITED CULTURES CLUB INTERNATIONAL FOOD FESTIVAL PIEROGIES, SAMOSAS, AND FRIED RICE...OH MY!**

BY MRS. R. MISITI-GARCIA

The United Cultures club is planning their annual Multicultural Food Festival for Tuesday May 26th.

Staff members have always been great at helping out by bringing in some tasty to sell during the lunchtime event, and we hope their contributions will again help this year to be a success! It's a great chance to showcase their diverse cultures and culinary skills while helping raise money for a great cause. Most of the money raised will be donated to the Mr. Milardovic's Million Penny Project to raise funds for Michaela Kameka. See her site at [www.hopeformichaela.com](http://www.hopeformichaela.com).

### **AFTER SCHOOL FITNESS CLUB**

The Fitness Centre is open Monday through Thursday from 2:30 to 3:30. There is still lots of time to get in shape for the summer! Bring a friend and work out after school.

## Student Activities

### **WELL-PLANNED PROM PROMISES THE SAFETY AND FUN OF ST. BENEDICT GRADUATES**

BY NATEISHA RIDDELL

St. Benedict graduates attended their senior Prom Friday, May 8th with hopes of the night being one they'll always remember.

This year's "Old Hollywood" themed Prom was held at Federation Hall at the University of Waterloo and ran from 7:30 pm until midnight. It was important to those planning the event that the graduates had a wonderful evening, but considered their safety to be the top priority as dozens of teachers supervising the event displayed.

"It is always mandatory [to have Police officers at Prom]," Marlie Melo, grade eleven student in charge of planning the formal explains. "We believe in the safety of the students."

In the week leading up to Prom, there were campaigns all around the school to raise awareness of the importance of safe driving and decision making. An emotional assembly closed the week, featuring a comedian named Stu, and the parents of Chris Robbins, a deceased St. Benedict student who passed away last year. Robbins' parents encouraged students to vow to make smart decisions on the road whether they be a driver of a vehicle or a passenger.

There were no problems with alcohol or substance abuse with more than 300 students who attended the event. Each student was searched upon entry of the hall, and tight security ensured that once students exited the building they were not allowed back in.

"Yazmin Butcher, Student Activities, Ms. Pawlowski [the Student Activities Advisor], Lynn from Special Events, and Kyle from Planet Goodtime [all helped with the planning process]," Marlie Melo

says. "The hall actually was booked last year, the theme was [chosen at] the beginning of the year, and meetings with Lynn and Kyle happened in about March."

---

***There were no problems with alcohol or substance abuse with more than 300 students who attended the event.***

---

Many students think adding a dinner before Prom would make the night more enjoyable and easier on everyone. However, Melo isn't so sure that it would be easier, explaining that, "Everyone before Prom is doing their hair and at parks or by the river taking pictures, [so time may become an issue]."

The "Old Hollywood" theme was complete with a red carpet, tables and chairs covered in white cotton fabric, a dance floor that illuminated the hall with white twinkle lights hung above, and a variety of music for all tastes provided by Planet Goodtime.

Many graduates were pleased once they found out there would be no issue with reserving their tickets, due to the unfortunate situation of some grade twelves last year. Federation Hall is a very large venue and the number of tickets available exceeded three hundred. However, last year St. Benedict's Prom venue wasn't large enough to allow every graduate to attend.

It isn't decided yet if Marlie Melo will be on the Dance Committee next year or if it'll be another position in Student Activities she'll obtain. However, if security, supervision, and planning pan out similarly to this year, there's no doubt that next year's Prom should be both fun and safe for graduates.

Although this event turned out very well and graduates were very happy with their Prom, some future graduates have worries. There are some parents who believe they should have the opportunity to participate in the event in some manner, whether it be with the planning process or supervising students at the formal.

## Other News

**SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING** Parents are invited to get involved in the St. Benedict community by joining our school council. Our next meeting is Thursday, May 28 at 7:00 pm in room 103. New members are always welcome.

If you are interested in helping with school council activities, but cannot commit to the monthly meetings, we still want to hear from you! Send an email to our principal, [Mr. McKinnon](#), or to one of the school council co-chairs, [Andrew Bagley](#) or [Belinda Lutes](#).

## Dates to Remember

**May 20:** Barbecue fun day

**May 21:** COPA Arts Night

**May 26:** Multicultural Food Festival at lunch

**May 28:** School Council, 7:00pm

**May 29:** United Faiths Liturgy

**June 4:** Grad Breakfast

**June 4:** Grad Liturgy

**June 4:** Athletic Banquet

**June 5:** Arts Banquet

Be sure to check the calendar on the school website for more information. Over the last few weeks our school's webmaster, Mr. Milardovic, has been revamping the calendar. It now has some really neat features, so keep your eye on it!

## Miscellaneous

*Due to technical issues, our survey isn't ready to be distributed. We should have it ready for the next issue of BENN. The purpose of it will be to help us assess how well we've done up to now, and provide us with guidance as we move into our second year.*

- Anton

Check out our website at <http://stbenedict.wcdsb.ca> for news and information updates.

**TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY AND GROWING!** Encourage other parents to join our emailing list! We've now put an image right on the Benny's homepage--click on the icon, and fill in the form, and voila! There are currently **262** people on the list.

This newsletter is also available on the school website if you [click here](#). You may want to send this link to other parents rather than forward your email--doing so may alter the layout and generate the page incorrectly.

Any comments? [Send us an email!](#)

**BENN STAFF:** [Mr. Anton Milardovic](#) | [Mr. Michael Huemiller](#) | [Miss Bobbi Bester](#)

