

THE CAIRN COMPASS

Inspiring students to love, learn, and lead together in God's world.

Spring 2023

100 Cans of Soup **2-3**

4-5 Living in Space

Community Planter Boxes **6-7**

8-9 Purple People?

Counselling Internship **10**

11 Parent Engagement Evenings

Golf Tournament 2023 **12-13**

14 Board News

Sponsors **15-16**

Empowering

by Kevin Huinink, Executive Director

"When are we actually going to use this?" I wonder if you ever had that thought in school. When addressing Student Engagement, we've been looking at the fact that when students do work that is only for their teacher to look at (which sometimes needs to happen), engagement can be low. As we increase the level of exposure student work has to others, engagement often increases.

As a Christian School, we see students as 'image bearers' - reflecting their Creator - this has implications for what we have our students do. God is active in redeeming His world, often through us, His people.

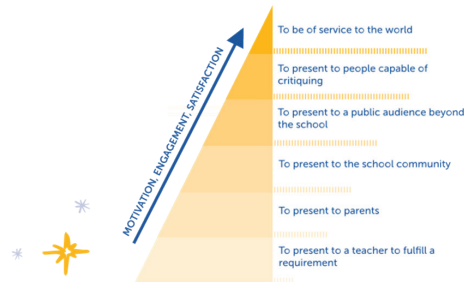
Student learning that produces real work that meets a real need for real people not only increases engagement but takes our role in God's kingdom seriously. Perhaps a better place to start is, **"How can our work be of service to the World?"**

Our rhythm through our theme year as we 'See God's story, and Live God's story' is 'Invite - Nurture - Empower.' Our last two Compass issues focussed on the **invitation** into learning and the **nurture** of students in their learning.

Enjoy reading on as we share how our students are **empowered** in their learning!

Hierarchy of Audience/People

Real people. Real needs. Real work.



adapted from EL Education



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100 Cans of Soup a 100-Day Celebration

By Stacy Kok - SK Teacher, Stoney Creek

The Senior Kindergarten class at Cairn Christian School Stoney Creek has spent the year with the challenge and central storyline of “Know and Go” - as we “Know” more about God, His amazing creation and His love for all, we need to “Go” and share what we know with others.

Each day of the school year, the SK students add a popsicle stick into a container to help count how many days that we have been in school. As we began to near the 100 day mark, the SK students and parents were challenged to start bringing in cans of soup. Our goal was to collect 100 cans of soup by day 100 and then to donate these cans of soup to the Stoney Creek Food Bank. As students brought in cans of soup, they were given the challenge to count them. This was a great way



*It made me feel happy
to give soup to people.*

- Quinn Numan

to practice counting, grouping by tens and writing our numbers. On our 100th day, the SK class was excited to have reached our goal of 100 cans of soup. We were able to group the cans by 10s and by 5s as we practiced skip counting to 100 as one of our 100th Day activities. The following week, we bagged up the 100 (plus!) donated cans of soup, boarded a school bus and delivered them to the food bank. While we were there, we were given a tour of the food bank and began to have a better understanding of how a food bank works and the needs that our local food bank has. The Kindergarten students were able to “Know” more about numbers (up to 100) and they were given the opportunity to “Go” and share their work (100 cans of soup) with others.



*It made me feel good
because we were
helping other people.*

- Celeste Van Huysteen



*It made me happy
because other people
can get more food.*

- Max Taylor





Living in Space

By Jill Walters, Grade 6 teacher, Smithville

What does education look like when we empower our students to not only learn, but learn with a purpose and the reason why? It looks beautiful, creative, inspiring, and sometimes even messy. This winter, the grade six class at Smithville were presented with the challenge: “What do humans need to thrive in space?” In a thought experiment, we imagined that after years of neglecting to take care of God’s creation, Earth was no longer able to sustain life as we knew it. NASA had recently discovered that life could be sustained on Jupiter’s moon Europa and has established a colony for humans to populate. The class was invited to design spaceships to transport humans on the six-year journey to Europa.

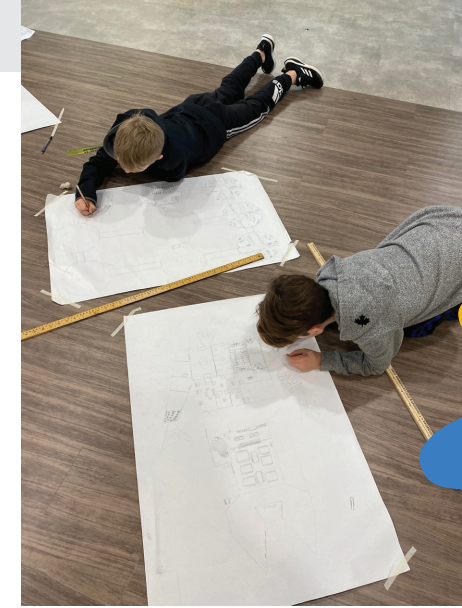
The first step on our learning journey was to conduct research. We visited Niagara College to learn how to grow plants without dirt, watched videos on how astronauts get oxygen at the International Space Station, and we invited an Engineer into our classroom to teach us exactly how to go about designing our spaceships.

Once our research was complete, it was time to start our designs. During this stage the students were able to put

their imagination, and personal touches on each of their spaceships. Some students included sports fields, and others libraries. Debates were had whether the spaceships should have schools, if the food was served in cafeterias, or prepared in a home-like cabin, and what do we do with people that do not follow rules? Some students created jail cells, while others added transport ships to return those that didn’t follow the rules back to Earth.

One element that all students investigated, was how can we invite God to be part of our journey on our spaceships. Prime locations were carved out for churches and to allow for community with God. As a class we looked into how we can create time for God through engagement, such as setting time to read the Bible, pray, and go to church. A new favourite activity in our class is to have a sit spot. To sit and clear one’s mind for five minutes of the busy-ness of the day to focus and enter into silent prayer with God.

Slowly our spaceships came together, all unique and creatively different. Each spaceship showcased each student’s personality, and their knowledge of what it takes to live in space. At the end of this project each student could explain what was needed to live in space, but more importantly each student was empowered to take on responsibility for their own faith, not only in this scenario, but in everyday life.



Community Planter Boxes

By Bonnie Desjardins, Principal at Stoney Creek

As part of the leadership team at Cairn Christian School, I have the opportunity to pop into classrooms to see what interesting things students and teachers are doing/learning about. Over the course of this year, our school has deepened its commitment to 'Teaching for Transformation.' ***A Teaching for Transformation school pursues a Christian education that invites the people of God's story into real work that forms self and shapes the world.***

Teachers have each written deep hopes for their students this year, which through the year link into what we call Formational Learning Experiences.

Our Grade One class, for example, has the following Deep Hope outside their room: My deep hope is

that students understand that they are loved and uniquely created by God, made to joyfully serve Him and others as they explore the world with curiosity.

How does a deep hope like this create space for and link into a meaningful Formational Learning Experience?

This year's Grade One class has found several opportunities to connect with Orchard Terrace residents. Orchard Terrace is a Long Term Care Facility that is located within walking distance of the school. Students made cards and wrote letters, sang Christmas carols, invited residents to a performance of the Spring Program, and took on one additional collaborative project.

Students wondered aloud how they might be able to bless the residents in a more long lasting way. Together, Miss Bylsma and the Grade One students decided to make planter boxes that would be filled with flowers and put into the facility's newly upgraded gardens.

Linking their learning in Social Studies (Local Community) and in Science (Materials and Structures), and with the assistance of Ralph and Diane Koornneef, students used their knowledge to design, sand, seal and build the planter boxes.

Through this learning experience, students lived into their part in God's story as uniquely loved and created by God, exploring the world with curiosity and blessing others as they did so.



Essential Questions
 1. What might our senior buddies need or enjoy?
 2. What might Grade 1 students be able to make or build?
 Games, pictures, puppets, animals, songs, verses, cards, flowers, birds, trees, stars, moon, puzzles, wall hangings, secret

When I saw the pocket like one of the things I saw in the box for Orchard Terrace

Planter Box for Orchard Terrace Name: _____
 What is the function of the planter box?
 So that are seniors
 What materials would you use to build a planter box?
 wood
 What kind of fasteners would work for a planter box?
 some screws
 Draw a picture of your design for a planter box. Be sure to label the parts.
 (Drawing of a planter box with flowers)

Purple People?

By Kimberley Visser, 'Kinder 3' teacher, Smithville

"But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."
-Galatians 22-23.

How are we called to interact with God's world? We are called to be children of God, but for young minds, this can be a big concept to grasp and understand. Thank goodness for the book of Galatians that so sweetly wraps it up with some fruit. Bananas, pineapple, grapes... No, that's not right, is it?

We started the year in Kinder 3 learning about what it means to be a good person with a reading of the book "The World Needs More Purple People." The book outlines 5 steps: ask really good questions, laugh a lot, use your voice, work hard, and be yourself. I was struck by the simplicity of the concepts presented in this book, but I knew that as Christians, we are called to something even greater. The students understood what it meant to be a purple person, but the concepts of



the fruits of the spirit took some more tactile ways of learning.

As we explored each of these concepts, the class planted seeds to learn about patience and trusting that the Lord will do His work. We read the Bible story of Hannah and her faithfulness through prayer and made prayer banners to remind us to pray. We shared who brings us joy in our lives and made cards to thank them for bringing us joy. I loved the lesson on self-control, where each child received a candy but was not allowed to eat it until after we finished our story. We talked about how hard it was for us to stop ourselves from doing something that we wanted to do and how God calls us to practice self-control so that we can live our lives the way He wants us to.

One of my favourite lessons was on kindness and showing kindness to others. We learned that there are those in the community around us that do not have access to food, and so we chose to do something about it. We wanted to show



kindness and love to those in our community, so we ran a food collection campaign in our school, collaborating with our grade 7 buddy class. As a school, we were able to donate 1300 lbs of food to the local food bank, and our class even filled up half a bus to bring it there ourselves. The students were able to weigh the food and then took a tour of the facility to see the real need that they were helping to love and care for. **My deep hope for**

my students is that they explore, question, and interact with God's world, knowing that they are

uniquely made and fully loved by God. On this trip, our class certainly demonstrated that they were exploring, questioning, and interacting with God's world! The students were so engaged and active participants in this food campaign. They each really took ownership of the need to serve others and did so with diligent hearts and willing hands. We have continued to unpack what it means to be "God's Purple People" throughout the year. Whether it's the big things like a large food campaign or the little things like holding a friend's hand when they are feeling sad or missing their parents. In Kinder 3, we are striving to show love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control as we interact with God's world, uniquely made and loved by Him!



Counselling Internship

By Danica Buys, MSW Intern at Stoney Creek

I am excited to share a little about my experience here at Cairn Stoney Creek as a student intern. I am currently completing my Master of Social Work at Dordt University and have been spending the last four months learning from and working alongside Marge Kloet, the school's counselor. Being at Cairn has been a blessing to me.

I was quickly welcomed as part of this community and have seen God's love shining through all of the staff and students. As I wrap up my placement, I have been reflecting on my experience. What has stood out to me is how decreased barriers to accessing mental health supports

can have a big impact for students.

I saw this firsthand in several students in the classroom and on the playground. They were able to improve their emotional awareness and coping strategies which built their confidence academically. On an individual level, having the opportunity to encourage and come alongside students has been a blessing for me. I observed how all of this allows for a stronger sense of belonging, improved learning, and empowerment for each student to live into God's purpose for their lives.



Parent Engagement Evenings

By Jason Geerlinks, Education and Engagement Committee

In March, the Cairn community had the opportunity to attend a parent engagement evening on 'Anger and Conflict.' The evening was led by Jessica Vanderweir, the CEO and founder of Nurtured First (formerly Our Mama Village). We started the evening in small groups, discussing how anger was dealt with when we were children and how we react to anger. We talked about how our lived experiences affect the way that we behave around anger.

Jessica then spoke to us about how a child's brain functions and how children need to learn to regulate their emotions. We were invited to 'get curious' about where our children's anger is stemming from so that we are able to meet the need that is responsible for the challenging behaviour. Jessica encouraged us to remember that anger is OK, but not all behaviour is okay.

I was thankful that Jessica was so willing to share her knowledge and experience with us. It was a very encouraging conversation to be a part of, and I was glad to have spent this time with a community ready to invest in their children.





Golfers Empowering Christian Education for Good

Every year for more than two decades, Cairn Christian School and Smithville Christian High School have worked together to organize an annual fundraising golf tournament. The format, the name, the location, and even the names of the schools have changed over the years, but one thing has remained the same: inviting people to enjoy fun, fellowship, and good food with the goal of supporting Christian education,

Here are some of the things that continue to make the annual golf tournament a success.



A FUN NEW NAME:
Swing for Students



LOYAL SPONSORS:
39 in 2022

A NEW LOCATION:
Whisky Run Golf Course
in Port Colborne



LOYAL GOLFERS:
102 in 2022

GENEROUS SPONSORS:
Lunch, Dinner, Carts, Snacks and Tournament Swag, and a healthy presentation of prizes!

Proceeds to support Christian education:
\$37,000
in 2022!!!



Save the Date!

The 2023 edition of Swing for Students will be
Saturday, September 16, 2023
at Whisky Run Golf Course.

Register as a golfer now and guarantee your spot.
Renew your sponsorship or join our amazing group of sponsors.
See last year's sponsors at bit.ly/2022SwingForStudentsSponsors

Do you want to be part of the team that organizes all the fun?
Email Kevin Huinink at khuinink@cairnchristianschool.ca

Renew or register to be a sponsor
bit.ly/2023SwingForStudentsSponsorRegistration



Sponsor Registration

Save your spot golfer registration
bit.ly/2023SwingForStudentsGolferRegistration



Golfer Registration

From the 2022-23 Board of Directors



Pictured left to right:
 Front: Josie DeGraaf, Tanya Heida, Kei Dube
 Back: Kevin Huinink (Executive Director), Melissa VanderWier, Henry Lof, James Riewald, Andrew Lang, Brian Wierenga, Julie Redekop

As we move closer into summer and approach our Annual Membership Meeting, we want to say a huge “Thank You!” to all of our school supporters. At the time of writing, we have just finished hosting our annual gala dinner (with both takeout and dine-in options) and, with some fun trivia, celebrated with those in attendance the rich history of our schools as well as God’s faithfulness in the present.

This past year has been marked by the successful completion of the Building the Way Capital Campaign, the initiation of its building projects, the transfer in ownership of the Fruitland CRC to our schools, the extension of our strategic plan, and important work started by our SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) Ad Hoc Committee.

We will soon know who will join our board as new members, as we wish Josie DeGraaf, Kei Dube, and Tanya Heida farewell as they finish their terms. All three have blessed our schools in their governance work with their gifts in the servant way of Jesus through unique and challenging times! We covet your prayers and support as we boldly and humbly continue to ‘Lead the Way.’

The Cairn Compass is a quarterly newsletter distributed to the Cairn Christian School supporting community.

Our Mission

Inspiring students to love, learn, and lead together in God's world.

Our Vision

To be the leaders in education by inspiring a diverse and unified student body to love, learn, and lead with God's grace, bringing Christ's love to the world.



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