

## *Guido de Brès Highlights, May 2019*

Summer is truly just around the corner despite the fact that the thermometer 'stubbornly refuses' to soar past 15 degrees. However, the teachers like the cooler weather because students still have their mind in school instead of out at the beach. There is always a silver lining! ☺

### **Out and About**

Shakespearean theatrical debuts, Mass Band concerts, badminton tournaments, track meets, soccer matches, camping trips to the rugged Canadian Shield, an Art trip to the nation's capital, and *un voyage* to La Belle Province...the list goes on and on! Guido students have endless opportunities to see and experience their Father's world outside the classroom as well as inside. Thanks to all the staff and volunteers who make these things possible! Check out Facebook, Instagram as well as the Guido website for pictures of these events and more.

### **Spring Membership Meeting**

On May 2<sup>nd</sup> every chair was full at the annual spring general membership meeting! Thanks to all who attended. Board Chair Dave Kampen began his welcoming remarks with the honest admission that the recent school evaluation created a measure of vulnerability on the part of Guido board and staff. To be carefully scrutinized in our homes or place of business for three days straight would be an unnerving experience for any of us, no doubt. Yet, the process was very good for all concerned, and a helpful and comprehensive report has been shared. There is much to be thankful for and some excellent suggestions for improvement. Details will follow in the next issue of the Gazette. There will also be an opportunity to

request a copy of the evaluation. One immediate response to the report was to hire staff for 2019-2020 namely Emily Wielstra in the Sciences and Paul Bartels for Woodworking. In particular, the latter hire allows Guido to offer woodworking courses in both semesters, something that many have wanted for some time.

### **All Hands on Deck!**

Board representative Mike Tel followed the chairman's comments with a report about what the Education Committee has been busy with. The committee's mandate is wide ranging including overseeing procedures and policies concerning uniforms, vaping, staff care, student issues, and curriculum decisions, hiring etc. These people do a lot of work! Thanks to all who serve on this committee. Yet likely no one is more hardworking than our staff at Guido and 9 members were recognized at the meeting for their years of faithful service, ranging from 5 to 35 years. Thanks for all you do and keep doing, Guido staff!

PR and IT committees also reported, emphasizing the importance of communication and connectivity with our supporting community as well as prudent use of our resources. Decisions about maintaining central labs versus individual student laptops continue to be a topic of conversation on the IT agenda and PR is always looking for new ways to increase engagement and support at every local level. Please keep this work in your prayers.

### **Financial Future**

Andrew Chong spoke at the meeting on behalf of the Finance Committee, encouraging us with results from the recent letter sent to the

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business owners in our community. Close to \$50K was received in response. Thanks to all who donated! The budget was adopted as presented at the meeting and all members should take note of the new fees effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. The category of parents who are coming to the end of their tuition paying years this June were strongly urged to remain as members, in this way appropriately responding with thankfulness for all the years that their tuition was kept affordable by other members and donors. If you know someone in this position, please take the time to urge them to stay committed to our school.

### **Caring Relationships**

Principal Jason Heemskerk then addressed the members gathered by sharing what the staff has been learning in their R&D sessions. The first sessions consisted of discussions about time management and how to help students with this crucial skill. In the 2nd Semester research and development began with a reflection about whether the students at Guido perceive the care the staff has for them. They considered communicating care for students through crucial conversations which employ the biblical injunctions to be “slow to speak, quick to listen, and slow to become angry”. The principal was thankful to hear from the school evaluators that their interviews with Guido students revealed that they DO know that their teachers care for them and can see evidence of this. Jason reflected that at Guido, “We have something really special” and it is thanks to God and His grace that staff-student relationships are thriving. He also credited the fact that school and community are all working toward the “same goal”.

### **Deeper Learning**

In the final portion of the membership meeting Laurie Koning, Grace Hulleman, and Jason Heemskerk took us to the Lone Star State! In March these three staff members travelled to Texas to attend a conference about *Deeper Learning in Christian Schools*. Funded in part by a bursary won by Laurie last year from Cardus (Rozema Award), they were able to come to a better understanding of how approaches such as project-based learning enriches and extends the learning for the student. The motto of deeper learning methodology is “*People of God’s story engaged in real work that forms self and shapes the world.*” When students learn in this way, impacting actual real world situations and events, it deepens their learning and skill set on many levels. Current Guido students were actually on hand at the meeting to raise awareness and funds for a CRWRF project to provide clean water in South Africa. Jason, Laurie and Grace were also part of a hands-on project themselves while at the conference, doing work at a refugee centre in downtown Dallas. Not only was the experience professionally enriching but apparently the bbq is highly recommended if you are ever in the area!!

Attendees at the membership meeting were then also given an opportunity to practice some of the methodology of deeper learning with each other. Learning to ‘bless the other’ by giving ‘warm’ and ‘cool’ feedback with phrases like “I was struck by how you...” or “Perhaps you could try...” was a refreshing exercise for all those who participated. The concern and intent to teach our children well, with care and excellence came through loud and clear to all present and this was so heartwarming. Please keep this work at Guido in your prayers!

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