# St. Alphonsus School News



Fall Term 2017



**Fall Fun for Everyone!** 

### From The Principal



#### **Silent Nights, Holy Nights**

Time has flown over this first term, here we are on the cusp of Advent! Although the stores have had Christmas decorations out since early October, this is time when preparations begin in earnest. The calendar is filling up quickly with family gatherings, office parties and outings with friends. I sometimes wonder if people are looking forward with anticipation or dread. An extrovert's dream could be an introvert's nightmare

I would classify myself as an extrovert, feeling energized from social interactions. Certainly that would be part of working with students, parents and staff that nourishes me. I seem to thrive on the noisiness and busyness that surround me. Over and over, though, I have encountered the idea that I need to embrace silence in order to hear to the voice of the divine. I recall one retreat years ago where the facilitator took the letters of *silent* and rearranged them anagram style into the word *listen*. Cute...maybe... but it seemed like an anathema to me. I have always worked in schools, had children and teenagers at home, life is busy...besides, am I not supposed to find God in other people? And where was I supposed to find this silence everyone spoke of?

Often I find that the things that I struggle against the most vehemently highlight areas I need to work on. As I continued on my spiritual journey, this recurrent theme battered my resolve, and slowly, grudgingly, I began to seek more times of quiet. Honestly, I had to take the silence in small doses or risk going into communal withdrawal! Lo and behold, as much as I still gathered energy from being social, these times of quiet and reflection allowed me to recharge in other areas that I had not even realized needed replenishment. I am not sure if that counts as divine presence, but certainly the experiences have given me a sense of peace and renewed purpose. Balance, then, rather than either extreme worked for me.

The pace of life hasn't gotten any slower in the intervening years and I am very prone to fall back into my habit of frantic activity. The advent of winter, when the first few snowfalls muffle the city sounds helps me to get back on track. Walking the dogs on these crisp, silent nights reminds me that I need to find ways to step away from the noise around me, even for a bit. In my attempts to find some semblance of equilibrium, I see in this darkening season and these symbolic flakes a prompting to make time for stillness, for balance and for prayer. Although this time leading up to Christmas can bring its own extra busyness and get social events, may this Advent season provide you and your family with some Silent Nights, too. We can all use a little quiet space to reflect on our own journeys and find balance and renewal in whatever these moments of stillness bring.

Have a blessed Advent!

Peace, Christine McInnis Principal Be still, and know that I am God.
Be still and know that I am.
Be still and know.
Be still.
Be.

#### **School Plan 2017-2018**

One of the tasks of the school administration is to develop a plan in consultation with the various members of the community, including staff, students and parents. Many of the initiatives pursued by schools require a long term approach for implementation. As a result, most school plans encompass more than one school year. This practice has been the case in our school; these goals will continue forward into subsequent school years.

#### **Goal 1- English Language Arts**

ELA Curriculum Implementation: To engage teachers and support staff in dialogue regarding the new provincial ELA curriculum.

- Staff will be involved in professional development across all grade levels.
- Priorities meetings throughout the year will focus on different aspects of the new curriculum.

#### **Goal 2-Sustainability**

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD): To assist students in becoming informed and responsible decision-makers, who actively contribute to the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of all people.

Staff will use professional development time to continue the process of developing a school plan specific to education for sustainable development

Staff will discuss ways to authentically engage students in curricular topics. We will review the foundations for sustainable development and environmental education. Teachers will use this professional development as a springboard for integrating ESD into their lessons.

Teachers will share and discuss ESD activities that take place at their grade level.

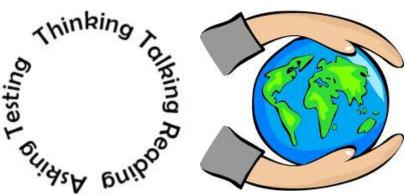
A student group for sustainable practice will be initiated.

#### Goal 3- Inclusion

Inclusion of All Learners: To ensure that students of all ability levels have learning experiences that are engaging, providing appropriate challenge to each individual.

• Professional development will focus on broadening the scope of lessons, allowing for greater differentiation across all subject areas.

The resource teacher will plan collaboratively with classroom teachers on a regular basis and will consult with teachers and resource staff to determine progress towards the goals that are set for individuals and groups



#### **Looking Back**

#### September

September started with a fun Meet the Teacher/Terry Fox Family Walk event on the 14th. Families got a chance to talk to staff and then joined in a walk through the community in honour of Terry Fox and the Marathon of Hope. As well, there was pizza and drinks aplenty!



At our first school mass on September 22nd our grade four students received their **Bibles** as part of the liturgy. Congratulations, friends! I wish you well on your journey to learn more about our faith.



Our **Student Council Elections** were held on Thursday, September 21st. Thank you to all students who participated in the election process, especially those who were nominated for positions. Congratulations to the successful candidates. This year's student council is comprised of the following members:

Prime Minister: Ben Philpot & Alexis Lloyd

Deputy Prime Minister: Damian Silva
Minister of Finance: Harshita Bhroat
Gr. 8 Premier: Mitchell Vanstone
Gr. 7 Premier: Dessya Mosienko
Gr. 6 Premier: Jacob Philpot
Gr. 5 Premier: Kendall Bilenky

They are a great group. I am sure we can look forward to the great events and activities that they will organize for the student body.

September saw the completion of another successful **Book Fair**. Our stalwart crew of staff and parents always manage to make it a fun event. This year's theme was, "Saddle up and Read!"; the art room was transformed with Wild West themed decorations! Our sales were close to \$5,000, which is a truly amazing number. Thanks to everyone for their hard work and support.



On September 28th our grade seven and eight classes went to Birds Hill Park for our annual Junior High Retreat Day. The theme of the day was discipleship. It was a perfect day for prayer, games and team-building.



#### October

On October 10th We enjoyed a great presentation on the **Birth of the CPR** as part of Canada 150 celebrations and courtesy of PALS.



Our **Student Led Conferences** took place on October 17th and 19th. As always, these conferences provided an opportunity to celebrate student learning and to set goals for the school year. Feedback from the students, parents and teachers was positive. We came out of the conferences feeling a sense of direction and purpose.

The **Dress Up and Dance** on October 21st was a ton of fun. Our committee has a report later in the newsletter.

A group of our grade five-eight students took part in **WE Day** on October 25th. WE Day is a social justice youth rally that aims to inspire youth to get involved in local and global issues through volunteerism and fundraising. It was an amazing experience to be at the MTS center with 16,000 young people; the energy was palpable! Certainly the message of finding something you are passionate about and acting on it is a great one for all of us to take away from the day.



On October 28th, the school hosted a Volleyball Tournament. There were eight teams in competition, both boys and girls. The day went very well and all the athletes and coaches were thankful for the opportunity to enjoy some time on our courts.





Our student council hosted its first event on October 31st. The annual **Hallowe'en Sock Hop** gave everyone a chance to kick up their heels for the afternoon before heading home for an evening of tricks and treats.



#### November

Our school's **Annual General Meeting** took place on Monday, November 6th. It was an opportunity for the board and the administration to discuss our plans with the parent community. I have included the School Plan Summary and a Financial Report from the board in this newsletter for parents who were unable to attend the meeting.

On Friday, November 10th the students participated in a **Remembrance Day Prayer Service**. It was a great opportunity to remember the people who have sacrificed so that we might live in peace and freedom. It was a beautiful service with story, prayer, scripture and song. A special thanks to Brian Dwyer for sharing his experiences in the the Canadian military. The students seemed to sense that it was a time of deep reverence and respect. Thank you to the parents who were able to join us .



#### **Looking Forward**

#### November and December

On Thursday, November 23rd our **first term report cards** will go home. Parents will have an opportunity to review them with their children. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

Advent assemblies will take place each Monday during Advent. Our first assembly will be on December 4th at 8:50 AM. Family members are always welcome to attend. This first Monday will be a purple colour day to mark the change in liturgical season.

We will be having our annual **Christmas gift wrap** on Tuesday, December 6th, where we wrap presents brought in by the students for local missions. An information letter with details about the project has been sent home. Parents are welcome to join us for the gift wrapping and to indulge in a little hot chocolate.

Our **Christmas Concert** will be on Thursday, December 21st at 7 PM. Please mark your calendars and join us for either the afternoon dress rehearsal (1 PM) or the evening performance. You won't be disappointed!

The **last day of school** before Christmas is on Friday, December 22nd. It will be a Red/Green colour day for students in anticipation of the big day. There is an 11:30 dismissal on this day.

#### **Open House**

Please mark your calendars for our school Open House on Sunday, January 28th. If you have friends or family that are interested in seeing the school and perhaps having their children attend here, this is an excellent opportunity for them to check it out.



### From the Gym

As usual, the fall has been a very busy time in the gym. All the classes are settled into our routines and are enjoying being physically active.

The primary classes have been working on moving safely in the gym. We have been playing cooperative games and are developing a sense of fair play. We are learning to use a variety of equipment and have been concentrating on throwing and catching activities. Our elementary friends have been playing volleyball lead-up games, participating in fitness challenges and enjoying a variety of low organized games. Our older students have been playing volleyball, working to assess and improve their fitness level and participating in different games and activities.

Our annual Terry Fox Family Walk was held on Thursday, September 14th. It was a great day and everyone enjoyed the pizza after the walk was finished. Thank you to everyone who participated and a special thanks to those who donated to this worthy cause.

Volleyball season is just finishing up. We had four teams on the go (two boys teams and two girls teams) with more than 50 student athletes involved. Through the season the players participated in a number of tournaments (including two hosted at our school) and over 40 league games. Our developmental teams concluded their season with tournaments for boys and girls on November 17th. Both teams had a remarkable season. We will have playoffs for our grade 7/8 teams during the week of November 27th-December 2nd. Thank you to everyone who came out to cheer our teams on. Thank you to Mrs. McInnis, Mr. Reyes, Mr. Lorenzana, Mr. Bend, Mr. Beilman, Mrs. Slobodian, Madame Curwain and Miss van der Zweep for all of the time dedicated to coaching the teams. As well, thanks to Katie McKenzie and Jonah Lorenzana who refereed through the season, and to Kendra Bommersbach and Karlee McKenzie who helped at our tournament. I am sure the athletes appreciate it; I know I do!

Our next inter-school sport is basketball. A great big thank you to our PALS for subsidizing the purchase of new glass backboards! Hopefully they'll inspire our athletes to great playing.

That's all for now. If you have any questions or concerns about the Physical Education program, please come by the gym or call me at the school. Take care and stay active!

Blake McInnis Physical Education Teacher





### **French Update**

#### **Fun Facts**

- Second to English, French is the most commonly taught language in every country of the world.
- French is recognized by the United Nations as one of the most widely used languages in the world.
- Every continent have at least one French speaking country on it.

#### On-line Resources:

<u>www.reverso.net/-</u> Translation/ dictionary <u>www.conjugation-fr.com-</u> Verb conjugator

#### **Suggested School Supplies:**

Just a reminder, all students (grades 3-8) will need a binder, pencil case and pencils. In addition, those students in grades 5-8 require a French/English dictionary.



### Bonjour à tous!

Throughout the first term, each class has been actively participating in various language based activities & games such as, Lotto, Bazinga, Buzz, Q & A's, Brain Teasers, all which have been connected to curricular outcomes within our thematic units.

My goals in French are to help students develop their knowledge of French vocabulary, increase positive attitudes, & enhancing communication skills. In turn, students will become better writers in French; 'if they can say it, then they can write it'.

I am thrilled by the overall participation and enthusiasm each class exhibits and look forward to starting a new and exciting next term!

à bientôt! Madame Curwain





### **Halloween Dress Up and Dance Event 2017**

The 21st annual Halloween Dress Up and Dance Social that took place on Saturday, October 21st was a fun filled event once again this year.

We are so grateful to our over 60 volunteers who gave of their time to make the event such a great evening for the St. Al's community. Additionally, we are thankful to all of those families who donated prizes to the children's raffle, to the parish for supplying the tables and chairs and to those families who participated in the St. Al's Pumpkin Patch! A huge thank you goes out to Mr. Cox for coordinating the moving effort of tables into the gym on the Thursday evening prior to the event.

Mrs. Resendes was also instrumental during the month of October as we worked through all of the preparations for the social. Her support and time was very much appreciated by the organizing committee.

The event raised just over \$2000 and all proceeds will be utilized by PALS to support various projects throughout the year.

Thank you again to everyone who supported this event – it was a spook-tacular evening for all!!



### **PALS**

Thank you to all who attended our 3rd Annual Wine Tasting. This years event was well attended and we were able to raise \$5800 for our school community!

Thank you to our Halloween Social Committee for organizing such great evening. Year after year this event proves to be a great evening out for both parents and children.

This is my second year as Chair of the PALS committee and 7th year in the St. Alphonsus School community. My sons are in Grade 6 and Grade 3. Our Co-Chair Jackie Mackling has twin boys in Grade 6. I feel so fortunate to be apart of this wonderful school community and would like to thank the numerous volunteers for taking the time to make each event a success throughout the school year.

PALS meets monthly and dates are listed on the school calendar. This is a great way to have your voice heard in deciding events and helping us think of new and innovative events for our community. We would love to see you at one of our meetings! And attendance counts towards Volunteer Incentive Hours!

I look forward to another exciting and fun filled year with the PALS committee!

Thank you and Enjoy the Festive Season!

Sherri Poklar Chair







### **School Board News**

Our AGM was held on November 6th. At the meeting, the Members elected two new Board members. We wish to welcome Bob Davison and Sam Pellettieri to the Board of Directors.

Portfolios for the 2017-18 year are as follows:

Chair/Human Resources: Christina Love

Past Chair: Michael Choiselat

Vice Chair/Project Management: Michelle Luedtke Recording Secretary/Finance Chairperson: Kyla Kramps Bingo/Public Relations Committee: Marion McKenzie

Fundraising Committee Chair: John Czezowski

Parish Liaison/Fundraising Committee/Public Relations Chair: Sandy Raposo-Lloyd

Fundraising Committee: Jeff Arnel

Project Management: Jonathon Schinkel

Member at Large: Bob Davison Member at Large: Sam Pellettieri Principal: Christine McInnis Pastor: Br. Janusz Maron

Parents and parishioners are welcome to attend the open portion of Board meetings, which are generally held on the second Monday each month at 7:00 PM at the school. Check the calendar on the school website for further details.

Christina Love

Chair, St. Alphonsus School Board of Directors



### School Board News Cont'd

#### Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2017

Enrollment for the 2016/2017 school year was 230 students compared to the prior year of 219. Academic revenue increased as a result of increased number of students as well as an increase in tuition and government grants.

Other revenue decreased mainly to a decrease in fundraising revenue. The decrease is due to a decrease in bingo revenues as there were fewer bingos held due to the hall being closed for several months. Also, funds raised from the annual Gala dinner are being used towards the expansion project and, as a result, for presentation purposes have not been included as other revenue this year. The Gala funds are included in the Net Assets for the current year.

Expenses decreased year over year mainly due to a decrease in fundraising expenses, bursary and tuition fees, and professional fees, partially offset by annual salary increases for staff.

The end result for the year is a small surplus of \$59,638.

Summarized Financial Statements					
Balance Sheet	June 2017	June 2016			
Current Assets	\$ 1,030,031 \$ 962,053				
Capital Assets	1,030,410 916,229				
Total Assets	\$ 2,060,441 \$ 1,878,282				
Current Liabilities & Debt	\$ 588,809	\$ 466,288			
Net Assets	1,471,632	1,411,994			
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 2,060,441 \$ 1,878,282				
Statement of Revenues & Expenditures					
Academic Revenue	\$ 1,677,762 \$ 1,561,443				
Other Revenue	343,142 428,601				
Expenses	(1,961,266) (1,991,119)				
Excess Revenues over expenses	\$ 59,638	\$( 1,075)			

If you would like to see the complete financial statements please make a request at the office.

As always, a huge thank you again to all the individuals and groups that contribute to the success of our School! If you have any questions please forward them to the office.

Sincerely yours,

Michelle Luedtke, CPA, CA Past Finance Chairperson



### From the Parish

#### First Friday Eucharistic Adoration

Join us on Friday, December 1st for First Friday Eucharistic Adoration - a wonderful way to prepare your heart for Christmas.

Come and spend a few moments in prayer with the Lord.

Adoration will begin after the 8.30 am morning mass.

#### **Christmas and Advent at St Alphonsus Parish**

Families of St Alphonsus School are invited to celebrate the

Sacrament of Reconciliation this December.

Several priests will be available for confessions at that time.

Please check you parish bulletin for the time and date.

http://www.stalphonsuswinnipeg.ca/

On Christmas Eve, the 7:30 pm mass will be a Children's Mass.

All are most welcome to attend.

Mass will also be offered at midnight and at 9 am and 11 am on Christmas Day.



Children's liturgy takes place at the 11 AM mass. This wonderful program opens the Liturgy of the Word to the youngest in our community. Every week they are invited to listen to the Word and participate in an activity bringing a tangible aspect to scripture. Children 4 - 9 years are invited to participate.

## St. Alphonsus Roman Catholic Church 315 Munroe Avenue, Corner of Munroe & Brazier, 204-667-9580

Christmas Eve at 7:30 pm & Midnight Christmas Day at 9 am & 11 am December 31 at 4.30 pm & 7:30 pm January 1 at 9 am & 11 am

Please come and celebrate Mass with us. All are most welcome.







### **Social Justice News**

Greetings from the Social Justice Group of St. Alphonsus School. We call ourselves "Generation Now". We are comprised of a group of hard working advocates from grades 5 to 8, promoting the idea to create a more equitable society, and therefore a "socially just society". We meet regularly, brainstorming for ways we can build awareness through activities, actions and fundraising. This fall, many students had the privilege of attending We Day at Bell MTS Centre. There were inspiring speakers and hope filled messages on how we can make positive change locally, nationally and globally. We collected food for Winnipeg Harvest and juice for the Gifts of Grace Street Mission at the Halloween sock hop. We participated in a Take Pride Winnipeg campaign and collected 1000 plastic bags for recycling.

This year, the group is focusing on sustainability. Sustainability means taking care of the Earth so that everyone's needs can be met in the present without compromising the needs of people in the future. More simply put, it means "enough for all, forever." Our specific sustainability focus is WATER. For our first water action, we organized a "Water Walk" to build solidarity with those around the world who struggle to have access to fresh water for consumption and self care. Students collected pledges for their participation and we walked through the community carrying jugs of water on November 20th and raised more than \$850! Great work team!

With hearts and minds working together, we will prevail in making positive change.

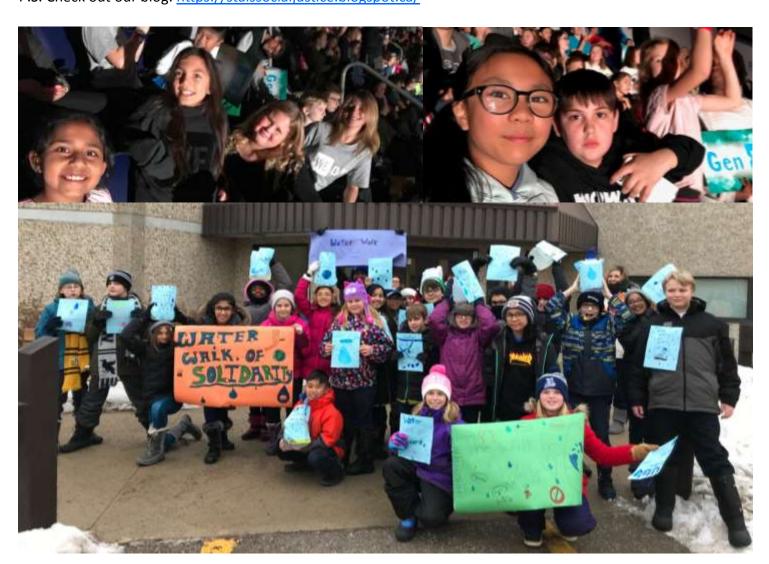
**Generation Now Students** 

Mrs. Pieczonka

Mrs. Resendes

Mrs. Slobodian







### From the Yearbook Committee

We have a fantastic school year ahead of us. As we anticipate the memories, friendships and special times ahead, we are also looking forward to one of our favorite traditions—the yearbook!

Not every student is into sports or possesses musical talent. That does not mean that they can't get involved with their school. Being part of the yearbook committee gets students involved on all levels – from mingling with students, to attending school events, and actively participating in something that benefits the entire school body. Students benefit from yearbooks just as much as the schools do in creating a positive school spirit. We look forward to compiling this year's yearbook for you.

We will be accepting orders online this year if it is more convenient. Please watch for the specific note that will be sent home on how it works. The price of the book will be twenty-one dollars this year. Don't miss out!

Yearbook Advisor Mr. T. Veryha

### **Gifts for Missions**

In your child's report envelope you will have received a copy of the letter for our annual gift drive. Over the past number of years, we have been collecting gifts for children in need. Many of those families and children have found their way to missions throughout the city.

Each child has been assigned a particular age group and gender to buy for. Participating in selecting and purchasing the gift will make the experience more meaningful for your child. Gifts should be nonviolent in nature (no war toys/guns or action toys of a violent nature). Toys should not require batteries, as this is often a luxury that families will not be able to afford. Gifts should range between \$10.00 and \$15.00. In past years, some families have purchased gifts exceeding the maximum price limit. Since these gifts are distributed when the children are together, we would like to send gifts of equal value so that one gift does not appear better than another. Should you wish to contribute more generously, please feel free to buy additional gifts – bearing in mind the price range.

The missions are located in the Elmwood, North Main, and Point Douglas areas of Winnipeg. These missions have been in these areas for a number of years and are a necessity for addressing the needs of persons in the area.

We ask that families bring in the gift by December 1<sup>st</sup>. We will be assembling in the gym on December 6<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the gift of giving. Please join us if you can, it is a great way to kick off the Advent season.



#### **Student Government**

As far as student government is concerned, everyone agrees that it has been a good start to a great year! We have been working hard planning to make this school year fun and we think it's going to be one of the best years yet! On Halloween, student government held a sock hop and canteen where fun was had by all! Over the coming months we plan to hold some colouring/drawing contests, such as an ugly sweater colouring contest before Christmas; staff versus student sporting competitions; canteens and treat sales; and some FUNdraising activities. Consensus is that there is a lot of school spirit, and we hope to harness this enthusiasm to make the year a fun and positive experience for everyone! Stay tuned for details of upcoming events!

Your Student Government

### **Sustainability**

As mentioned in our School Plan, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is one of the school's ongoing priorities. We have a number of initiatives that are underway to reinforce our core message, "Enough for All, Forever!" Here's what's on the go:

- 100% Recycling into the Recycling Box Our primary goal is zero recycling in the garbage. Often people forget what can be recycled or simply put recyclable items in the nearest bin. Classes have done a garbage audit to check their understanding and will follow up with two more over the course of the year to note progress. If you'd like to refresh your own understanding and practice at home, you can find support on city's recycling page: <a href="http://winnipeg.ca/waterandwaste/recycle/cartcollection.stm#faq">http://winnipeg.ca/waterandwaste/recycle/cartcollection.stm#faq</a> and Simply Recycle: <a href="http://simplyrecycle.ca/what-can-i-recycle/">http://simplyrecycle.ca/what-can-i-recycle/</a>.
- Refillable Bottles Please. Last year, we asked that everyone bring refillable water bottles to school, rather than single use disposable water bottles. This practice was encouraged for all school events. We are continuing with this thrust this year and have added additional water bottle filling stations at all drinking fountains in the school.
- Wasteless Wednesday. As well, we began Wasteless Wednesdays last year. This will also continue this year, with the goal of no garbage and no recycling on this day each week. Our hope, of course, is that good environmental habits will seep into the other weekdays as well.
- **Plastic Cutlery, No More!** When students forget their lunch utensils, they now have access to a class set of metal forks and spoons, rather than disposable cutlery. Teachers have a system in place to allow the borrowed items to get washed and returned for future forgetters.
- **Newsletters goes Digital** Our newsletters, starting with this edition are going online. You will receive a digital copy to read, in full colour. Sweet! If you need a paper version please contact the school office.



### **Volunteer Opportunities**

As the year progresses, some parents are wondering more about volunteer opportunities within the school. There are a number of different ways in which parents can fulfill their volunteer incentive hours while helping out at the school. Below is a list of some of the opportunities available, as well as contact information for the person in charge of the particular area. If you have any additional questions please don't hesitate to contact the volunteer coordinators or call the school office.

Volunteer Opportunity	<b>Contact Persson</b>	Phone Number	Time frame
School Bingo	Arlette Reyes and Prima Galapon	204-632-4111 204-669-1223	Thursday evenings, ongoing
Dress Up and Dance Hallowe'en Social	Ardele Karaganis	204-894-6374	September /October
Gala Dinner & Dance	Melanie Bilenky & Starlene Mosienko	204-801-4951 204-471-5840	Planning-year round Dinner-Spring
Family BBQ	Liz Azinha Nicole Henderson	204-997-8847 204-293-1563	Spring
School Board	Christina Love	204-667-6271	Year Round
Open House	Christine McInnis	204- 667-6271	January
Maintenance/Gardens	Richard Lambert	204-667-6271	Fall /Spring
PALS	Sherri Poklar	204-230-2933	Year Round
Coaching	Blake McInnis	204-667-6271	Volleyball Sept-Dec Basketball Jan– Mar.
Book Fair	Helen Dembicki	204-667-6271	October
Used Uniform Sales	Lisa Lachance Ruth Lorenzana	204-667-6271	Throughout the year
Tech Committee	Doug Martens	204-228-7333	Year Round
Vision/Hearing Screening	Michelle Wolf	204-667-6271	Fall/January
Library	Kerry Babiuk	204-667-6271	Year Round
Special Events (Christmas Concert, Gift wrap, etc.)	Christine McInnis	204-667-6271	Year Round