



FEBRUARY 2012

From the Principal

I have shared a list of advice for parents for the past few years on how to work with teenagers; you can find it on the next page. I put some of these tips in the September newsletter, and given some of the challenges we've faced so far this year, I am sharing them again.

For the past thirty-six years, I have had the good fortune to work with high school students. Each day at St. Paul Preparatory High School, I work with 200 students. This does not make me an expert by any means. I have seen students and my own children make some very positive and, at times, courageous choices. I have had to love students at times when they may not have been the most lovable. I can promise you that 99.9% of all the students that I have had the privilege to work with will go down the right path, graduate from high school, and move on to the next level of learning.

I have now worn a tuxedo to school on 20 Tuxedo Tuesday's. My intent is to have fun, remind students that we get one chance to make a positive first impression, and to spread the message that when we dress up we feel good about ourselves and do our best work. It is a little confining to wear a tuxedo for 12-14 hours but it is worth it to send the message to students each week.

Sincerely,
Chuck Briscoe

Robotics

DAN FORSETH

Though only half over, I can tell that this is going to be yet another memorable robotics season at St. Paul Prep. This year's game involves shooting basketballs into hoops and balancing robots on bridges. Though it may seem like two simple tasks, to complete them is actually very difficult. The mechanical engineering team has been busy designing the robot from top to bottom with help from parent Mark Manzella. They have all the pieces planned and soon will come the time to build and debug. The programming team has been working with Eric Anderson from CRAY. He has been teaching them even more languages in addition to English: Python and C++. The programming students have started to learn how to control the robot and manipulate the physical parts on the robot. The electronics team has been working with Jeff Forseth from the University of Minnesota Medical Center Fairview. They have been working on planning the new robot with both the programming and mechanical team. Their time to shine is still to come, but I am confident that they will rise to the challenge. With our deadline coming in three weeks, every student is working hard to accomplish our goals. Our competition is March 30th and 31st. FIRST Robotics Competitions are like nothing you have ever seen, so I encourage you to attend. If you are interested in assisting the robotics team, any help will be greatly appreciated. Please feel free to contact me: dforseth@stpaulprep.org.

Parenting Teenagers

TEN TIPS TO STAY AHEAD OF THE GAME

The following list is what I believe you can do as a parent to not only survive your years with your teenager, but also to be able to look back and say those were some of the best years as parents.

BE A PARENT NOT A PAL.

As parents we need to be our teen's anchors, not their best friends. Set clear boundaries, yet approach your teen with love and respect.

IGNORE THE ATTITUDE.

Save your energy for the big stuff. Is it really worth arguing about blue hair? You will find that by practicing my 24 hour rule (wait for one day before saying anything) many things will look different.

TALK THE TOUGH TALK.

Teens need to know your perspective on tobacco, drugs, alcohol, and their friends. Explain why you feel the way you do. Ask them if their friends are taking them in the right direction or in the wrong direction?

COMPLIMENT YOUR TEEN.

Make it a habit to say at least three positive things to your teen every day. Some days this may be a challenge but there is something nice you can say each day. It is very easy to notice the negative; no teenager or adult who I know has complained about receiving a compliment.

GET TO KNOW YOUR TEENAGERS' FRIENDS AND THEIR PARENTS.

Friends are a big deal, but connecting with the parents of these friends will become your lifeline. By consistently checking in with parents you will have your finger on the pulse of their activities.

DON'T BE A MAID.

It is important for every teenager to have a meaningful role in the family. Every teenager is capable of mowing the lawn, shoveling snow, helping with laundry, and cleaning their own room. Who will be there to assume this role when they leave home?

MAKE RESPECT AND TRUST A TWO-WAY STREET.

If you expect respectful behavior from your teen, parents and principals need to demonstrate how they handle issues in a respectful manner. Explain to your teenager that they will earn a great deal of trust by consistently doing what they say they will do.

LISTEN, DON'T LECTURE.

When kids are ready to talk, be ready to listen. This may not be at a convenient time for you, but please try and take the time to listen at that moment. Please resist offering too much advice but helping them think through their issue by asking them questions.

AGREE TO DISAGREE.

It may seem like you disagree about everything with your teen. Don't worry, they are figuring out for themselves where they fit into the world and may be using you to try out different perspectives.

HAVE FUN TOGETHER.

These can be challenging years as a parent, but there can be plenty of fun times and good memories. At this stage, you'll be the last person your teen wants to be seen with in public, but offer to drive them and their friends to school and athletic events. Listen to their conversation during the drive; it will provide a wealth of information about your teen. Remember to smile and search for things you can do together.



MN Scholastic Art Competition

KATE WOOLEVER

SPP students Hee Soo and Ho Min both entered artwork into the Minnesota Scholastic Art Competition. There were 1,376 pieces of artwork submitted from students all across Minnesota.

Hee Soo entered 8 pieces and Ho Min entered 2. Hee Soo received top honors, Gold Key, for three of her pieces including her painting, *Forgotten Bike* (above) Silver Key for one piece, and Honorable Mention for two more. Ho Min received the Silver Key for *Viking* (below.)

Their artwork will be on display at the 2011-2012 Minnesota Scholastic Art Exhibition January 30, 2012 to February 26, 2012 in Minneapolis College of Art and Design Gallery's Concourse Gallery, in Minneapolis. It's incredible to get your artwork selected for this let alone placing so well! Congratulations Hee Soo and Ho Min!



Math Meet 4

JIM WALKER

At the end of meet 3, Central was in the lead with 30 points, Highland second with 24 (as usual) and SPP was third with 19 points. Cretin-Derham Hall had beaten us in the last two events, and had 18 points. In order to have a chance at third place in the district, SPP had to defeat CDH in this 4th meet, and then place in the top 4 in meet 5. The students understood the stakes, and prepared in the previous week to do their best, knowing CDH often does well in event 4.

Students left their classes early – well, most of them. A couple of team members did not hear the announcement and forgot to leave at 2pm. I took the students I had with me to the bus stop, and we boarded the 2:10 bus for CDH, the missing students would follow on the next bus and hopefully arrive on time to participate in later events. On the way, we began reassigning test events to make sure all events were covered by the new team (one of the missing students was a team member.)

We arrived at the school, and received a call that the next group of students were on their way. A few minutes later they called back to say they had gotten off the bus and did not see the school. After asking their location, it turns out they had disembarked several blocks away. It was three o'clock, so we went with the reassigned team members. At the meet, however, one of the other teams (Washington High School) would be late, so if our wayward students arrived in time, they could join them for the testing.

After the first two events, we were doing okay, the substitute team members had performed well. During these events, our wayward students walked past the school. CDH is a lovely brick complex next to a playing field. On the other side of the field is a cinderblock apartment building. The students went to that building, assuming it was the school. Eventually a passerby put them straight, and they arrived – in time for the retest of AB with Washington.

We did very well in the third individual event (thanks to the student's hard work) and also had a good showing in the last event. We were ahead of CDH and in third place – now it would depend on our performance on the team event. It was a difficult event, with many teams scoring only 2 points. Again though, SPP showed its strength, producing 8 points and securing second place, only a few points behind second place Highland. Our last meet will be on February 13.

Open House

Thursday, February 9 from 6:00pm - 8:00pm

380 Jackson Street, Suite 100 • St. Paul, MN

Please join us for our Open House on February 9. The event will feature a mini-schedule of the school day. You are invited to follow your student's schedule for 10 minute presentations from their teachers. The Open House is a great way to meet our principal, talk to faculty and learn about the courses your child is taking this semester. We will also have some students on hand to help you find your way to class and talk about their experiences at St. Paul Preparatory School.

Arrive at St. Paul Prep at 6:00pm to receive a copy of your student's class schedule. Gather in the lunch room to mingle with current students and hear a word from our principal. The mini-schedule will begin promptly at 6:20pm.

We hope you will be able to make it!

RSVPs are appreciated: information@stpaulprep.org or call Jennifer at 651-288-4610.



GUYS AND DOLLS JR

Students performed Guys and Dolls Jr. this January. We had a wonderful turn out of students, faculty and staff who came to show their support to a cast of 28 talented performers. Congratulations Mr. Schramm, the cast and crew on a successful show!

February 2012

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--------|--|---------|--|---|--|----------|
| | | | 1 Girl's Basketball @ Battle Creek 5pm | 2 | 3 Girl's and Boy's Basketball @ Cristo Rey 4:30 and 6pm | 4 |
| 5 | 6 Deadline to Transfer Classes | 7 | 8 | 9 6:00pm Open House | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 No School, President's Day | 21 | 22 | 23 6:30-7:30 Parent's Meeting | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | | | |