

THE COURIER

FALL
2014

Published by the Board of
COVENANT CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

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Class of 2014



FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Rick Noorman



As I followed the sad story of Freedom Christian School coming to an end, I was moved to consider again the blessings that we have at Covenant Christian High School. Living in Georgetown Township for many years, our family has gotten to know many people from the Freedom Christian community. We have found them to be good Christian people with a heart for seeing their kids educated with the Bible as the foundation. It is a sad situation and I feel badly for those who are left looking for a school. I don't want to go into the whole story and speculate about the reasons for the closing of that school. I do want to use that event to consider the great blessings that we have at Covenant. As I approach the school doors each day, I continue to be amazed at God's goodness that is so evident in this institution that he has given us. God has been good to us. In this issue of the *Courier*, and in the next, I would like to reflect on these blessings and consider, too, the challenges that we face as we move forward. In this issue we will look at some of the blessings in the gifts and talents that are at work in our school. Next time, we will consider the challenges and how it is evident that it is God's grace that sustains us.

THE GIFTS

Everything about our school is a gift, that is, of ourselves we are not worthy to have it nor would we even want it. God blessed us many years ago when he led a group of men to form an association to lay the ground work for a Protestant Reformed Christian high school. The most important part of that work was to establish the grounds upon which the school could and would stand, even until this day. These grounds were firmly based upon the Scriptures and the Reformed creeds. These grounds incorporated a covenant view that firmly placed the responsibility for the education of children upon the parents. Over the years, these parents have seen the importance of this school as an instrument in the proper raising of their children. Along with the dedication of parents there is the proper support from all those who are witness to the vows of baptism in the church. These two things, the solid Reformed basis of the school and the broad base of support for our schools, are great blessings that we enjoy. They are also the grounds for the hope that we have that, by God's grace, Covenant Christian will endure and continue to educate our children.

God also blesses us by placing us in a supportive and faithful church community. In these churches, exhortation is given to parents as to the necessity of Christian education. There is no waffling on this matter. It is important! The schools are seen as a primary focus of the family and as an essential component to the rearing of the children. It is heard from the pastors on the pulpit and the elders in the

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homes. Congregational prayers regularly thank God for the schools and ask for His continued blessing upon them. These prayers also ask blessings upon the teachers and the students as they labor in the schools. The churches as a whole and the members individually, young and old, contribute great sums of money for the support of the schools. Countless hours are volunteered by fathers, mothers, and grandparents to help out and to be supportive of the Christian school. This multi generational support, shown in so many ways, is a blessing not seen in all Christian schools today.

As parents and as a school, the greatest gift that we are blessed with is the Bible. The infallible revelation of God that according to the Belgic Confession, Article 2, "makes himself more clearly and fully known to us... as far as this is necessary for us to know in this life, to his glory and our salvation." The Word of God guides everything that we do in this life. We follow that Word in our teaching, our learning, and our discipline. We follow it in our nurturing and the rearing of our children and our life together as brothers and sisters in Christ. All this is done within our schools "to his glory and our salvation". Our schools are indeed a great gift that must be treasured and preserved.

THE TALENTS

God has also blessed us with talents that are put to work in many different ways in the school. The first talent that comes to mind in relation to the school is the talent of those who teach. The talent to teach involves many aspects. It requires having detailed knowledge in

a subject and having a passion for learning more about that subject. It involves knowledge of the process of learning and what it takes to help someone else know and appreciate the subject. Those who teach must also have the talent to motivate those who are being taught so that they have a desire to learn all that they can. They must manage the classroom so that it is a proper environment in which learning can take place and love is exhibited. Most importantly, the talent to teach in our school involves the ability to convey to the students, through their teaching of every subject, the love of God for them. Responding to that love, the teacher and the student learn of their responsibility to love Him and serve Him in every part of their life. This is the awesome work of teaching! It is carried on in our school by very talented teachers.

We also are blessed to be around so many talented students. It has been amazing to me over the years to observe so many very gifted young people. Many times each year, as I observe our students at work, I remark to myself that I could never do what these kids are doing. The many and varied talents of the students make our work in schools a joyful work. It is wonderful to see these talents grow and develop over a few short years in the high school setting.

These talents come to light in different areas. We have students who are very talented academically. They are quick to grasp new concepts and can readily think about what they learn in the broadest of contexts and apply what they are learning to other areas of life. These students are a true joy to have in the classroom. Some students have particular talents in the analysis of literature or in the use of language in the writing of a poem or essay. Others are able to quickly grasp the application of a mathematical concept, the understanding of a science project, or the ability to see the effects of an historical event. As they exercise these talents in the Christian school classroom setting, all glory goes to God.

One of the more inspirational uses of talent by students occurs in the area of Art and Music. It is a joy to hear our students giving praise to God with their instruments and voices as they participate in band and choir. They begin with a song that is new to them. As they sing it, they appreciate more and more what those words mean to them and it sinks deeper and deeper into their hearts. Then they add the musical interpretation which brings even more power to the words. The end result is a beautiful expression of faith, hope and praise to God which often brings tears to the eyes of those who sing and those who hear. The same can be said of the students who make beautiful drawings and blend colors together to make a work of art that is aesthetically pleasing. The work that they produce exhibits the wonder of this aspect of God's creation. In the development of these student talents, we again see the influence of the talented teachers who guide the students through this process.

We can also see our students use their physical talents as they participate in our athletic program. In each sport we see individuals developing in their own talents and then those same individuals come together and work as a team to accomplish a goal. Here too we see great growth over the 4 year span that they spend participating in those sports. It has been wonderful over the past few years to see our teams excelling at the State tournament level. But even if a team does not advance, it is encouraging to see the growth that occurs on an individual level and also as a team.

We see students using their talents of leadership, working with a group, to accomplish a task. We see this in a formal sense with the work of the Student Council as they plan activities for the other students and as they work on various class committees. We see it as they apply those talents to help in the area of special education. We also see it informally as students set aside their own concerns and needs to help another student who is going through a tough time or to spend time with a fellow student who struggles socially or academically. It is a blessing to observe this trait develop in students as they mature and get ready to move out of high school to new the next phase of life.

Finally, Covenant Christian High School has been blessed over the many years of our existence with talented men who serve on the School Board. Each Board has a unique makeup of men from different professions, backgrounds, and walks of life. When they come together as a Board, they work collectively to use the talents that they have each been given. This may occur in the area of the building and grounds, finance, or helping to set educational or administrative goals. They all apply themselves to further the interests and work of the school. They approach the work as fathers who have the interests of their children in mind, but they also do so as trustees working on behalf of the parents to fulfill the mission of the school.

Gifts and talents have been granted to us in abundance. We see them being used at Covenant on a daily basis. We must never take them for granted but always give thanks to God for them. Next time we will consider the challenges that we face as we continue to operate the school and the evidence of God's grace that is found here.



FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD
John Flikkema III, President



I've realized that the job of a School Board president is very much like that of a business owner - a large portion of the job is listening and observing. Thus, even though I was called to participate in and speak at our most recent graduation exercises, I arrived early primarily to observe.

Getting there an hour before commencement may seem on the cautious side, but then, it was an affair of state; one involving sons and daughters of the Most High God. We assembled to thank our Father King for his care, his guidance, and his love shown to both us and to the heritage he had given to us; that is, to our sons and daughters.

I was very pleased by the attitude displayed by the students and student-graduates of Covenant Christian High School. "Attitude" an old friend of mine has said, "I can't define it, but I know a bad attitude when I see it." Me too, and... I didn't see it. I sat behind the graduates and was well-pleased with their attitudes toward their classmates, teachers, family, and friends as well as their (to use a word from an old report card of mine) "deportment."

Yes, there was a festive air of celebration. And there should have been. Teachers and students had completed a milestone; a journey of hard work filled with struggles to overcome. However, there was also "in the air" a dignified feeling of quiet reserve. The students recognized that it was an affair of state - a Kingdom affair, they carried themselves as children of God.

The students were attentive during Reverend Eriks' speech. I observed. And I, along with the others gathered to celebrate their graduation, truly appreciated the singing and speaking - three valedictorians, mind you! As we exited the building, there were many more opportunities for me to observe graduate behavior as they interacted with loved ones and well-wishers. I thanked God for His wonder-work in our hearts and the community He has built us into through Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit. Truly, "The lines are fallen unto [us] in pleasant places; yea, [we] have a goodly heritage" (Psalm 16:6).



FROM THE LONG RANGE COMMITTEE
Dan Monsma, Chairman



At our annual association meeting this spring, the Society unanimously approved the purchase of the Lewis property at 4550 Hall Street S.W. On August 5, 2014 school representatives closed on the 11.78 acre property. The parcel is north of the baseball and soccer fields and includes a log cabin, a four stall unattached garage and standing timber. The land was found to be free of contamination from nearby oil wells. We are grateful to our heavenly Father for providing the opportunity and the means for this purchase.

The Long Range Planning Committee continues to consider the future needs of the school and make recommendations to the Board regarding action that needs to be taken to meet those needs. This work will involve gathering information and considering options for how to provide for our school as it continues to grow.

FROM THE TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
Dan Monsma, Chairman



During the past summer our techies were very busy! There were updates and regular maintenance performed to keep the systems running smoothly, as well as a few new components added at the school. This fine work was done by Mr. Rick DeVries, Mr. Matt Elzinga, and Mrs. Ria Faber. One notable project was arranging and assembling equipment needed for Mrs. Crossett to teach Spanish classes from Northern Ireland.

To keep up to date and current, 25 new computers were installed in the media lab. The 2008 model year media lab computers were moved to the library, where they are still functional, but a bit slower.

Our techies also ordered and tested twenty new Chromebooks (laptops using Chrome Operating Systems). These laptops are now used in Mr. Pols' and Mr. DeVries' classes. Learn more about Chromebooks in this issue's CED articles. Other teachers have also been using the Chromebooks for a variety of tasks.

We are very blessed to have a strong Technology Team at Covenant Christian High School. Their behind the scenes work is essential for today's students and teachers. The fine leadership and oversight provided by Mr. DeVries, Mr. Elzinga, and Mrs. Faber is first rate. Next time you see them, thank them. We also should thank God for providing us with a Kingdom minded, talented staff at CCHS and the modern hardware to aid in training our youth.

FROM THE BUILDING COMMITTEE
Kevin Van Overloop, Chairman



New building projects or additions? Nope, not this year. New schools to rent? Nope. New schools to buy and sell all in one months time? Nope. For all intents and purposes compared to other school board building committees, we have had it easy as a building committee at CCHS. But that does not mean that we have not had some changes.

Since its existence, Covenant has relied on volunteers, janitors, and other part-time handymen or builders to keep the building maintained and the grounds looking beautiful. Many, many thanks go out to all those who have helped in years past. A special thanks to Jim VanOverloop for his countless hours the last few years and to Case Lubbers for his time and dedication for the past thirty-plus years (and he might correct me because it very well may be more than that). Thanks also to them for structuring the boiler and heating system at the school to be so efficient. The school once again was under its utility budget for the 2013/14 year by \$19,000 despite the very cold winter.

But despite all of this help, a lot of the day to day issues and making sure that repairs were followed up on and completed, fell on our administrator. With a student body of 355, a staff of 32 plus volunteers, this issue is not what our administrator, as capable as he is, should be shouldering. Covenant has had several additions over the years, with a significant one just a couple years ago. We now have more than 30 classrooms and 80 mechanical pieces of equipment that need bi-annual maintenance with filters being cleaned and/or changed, bearings greased and more. As a building committee member, this alone was daunting enough just to think about, much less to do it.

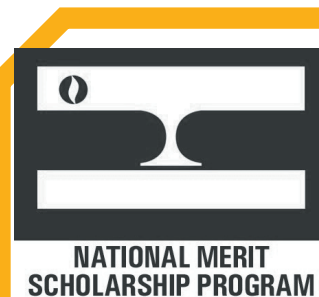
So a search was made for a part-time maintenance person to be on staff as an employee who would be around the school on scheduled hours. Interviews were taken and a solution was found right under our noses. One of our teachers, Mr. Jon VanDyke fit the build to a tee. He had served in a similar capacity at Kalamazoo Christian High School and was working his summers doing maintenance at Calvin College. He came with a lot of experience having done many of the things we need to have maintained at Covenant, including the mechanical equipment maintenance. An added bonus was that he was already on staff and will be at the school every day. We are comfortable and have been assured that this should not take away from his first responsibility which is in the classroom. Since being hired, Jon has dug right in and has done a phenomenal job in managing the building and taking care of all the problems. By managing these issues, he has alleviated a lot of problems from our administrator. Just to get an idea of what he has done,

here is a sample of items he worked on in just his first two weeks working a few hours a day: fixed latches on 5 doors and hinges on 3 doors, checked and serviced all exhaust fans on roof, replaced a belt, replaced filters and greased the bearings on mechanical equipment in 8 rooms, removed bee hives in the ceilings of 2 classrooms and sealed cracks above windows, replaced hallway ceramic tiles, replaced several ceiling tiles, cleaned the filter for the septic tank, repaired 4 classroom tables, repaired 8 desks, and finally removed debris from out of the roof drains. I'm tired just typing this. Then in the following couple of weeks, white boards and fans were hung, ballasts were replaced, lockers fixed and bleachers repaired. As you can see, there is a variety of work necessary to keep the school well-maintained.

Eventually, Jon will also learn the finer aspects of the boiler system and all of the controls that Jim Van Overloop and Case Lubbers have set up for the school to run so efficiently. In the meantime, Jim will continue to monitor this from his laptop, as we don't want to have him give up his "baby" too soon. As you can see from the savings we have had, this is extremely important to maintain, but also it is so important for others to learn it.

In other work this summer, Mr. Joel Noorman did a lot of painting at the school. The gym walls, the entire section of the west hall and the east end of the main hall were all repainted. And once again, Mr. Jon Engelsma and crew did a great job of cleaning the entire school and getting the place looking clean and crisp for another school year. So a big thank you to all of them.

In many ways as a building committee, rather than adding to our work load, we have actually reduced it or at least reduced our concerns on a job being well done. But there is always more work to be done, and new projects to plan. We are so thankful to our heavenly Father for all these physical blessings as well as the capable help He has given us to maintain such a beautiful facility to educate our covenant young people.



We have been notified that Senior Mackenzie Kuiper has been named as a Semifinalist for the 2015 National Merit Scholarship competition. This recognition is the result of Mackenzie's performance on the PSAT test last fall and it qualifies her to continue in the competition by taking the SAT test later this year. Of the 1.5 million students who took the PSAT test in fall of 2013, only 16,000 of them move on as Semi-Finalists. Mackenzie is the daughter of Brad and Lynne Kuiper. Also doing well in the competition is Kelsey Kuiper who was in the top 34,000 and named a Commended student. Kelsey is the daughter of Gerald and Beth Kuiper. Congratulations to Mackenzie and Kelsey!

FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Herm DeVries, Chairman



The school this year seems to be off to a good and busy start. The first six weeks are done and fall sports are winding down. Teachers and students are into their routines. Most of the School Board work has also been routine.

The Education Committee would like to thank those who have worked hard to get this edition of the *Courier* published and distributed. There are a few items of change that the Education Committee would like to inform our supporters of.

Previously, a large portion of the work of the *Courier* was handled by Mrs. Linda VanUffelen. Linda was also very important in counseling and guiding our students with regards to their life after high school. This past summer she informed the Board that she was leaving to work at Heritage. We will miss her and the wise and godly example she set for our students. The Education Committee takes this opportunity to thank Linda for the many years of dedicated work she gave at Covenant and wish her the best as she takes up her work at Heritage.

The Education Committee would like to publicly welcome the new members on our staff who are introduced elsewhere in the *Courier*.

Paula Kuiper has been hired to work full time in the Academic Support position. Paula takes over for Liz Griess who is now filling our needs in the English Department.

Gayle Lotterman has also been hired to work part time (2 days a week) in Academic Support. She is working the other 3 days of the school week at Heritage. Gayle was hired to fill the opening left by Brianna Prins. Brianna's college schedule prevented her from being able to help in Academic Support this year. We thank Brianna for the work she has done in Academic Support and wish her the best as she completes her college studies.

Kristin Crossett has been rehired to teach our Spanish classes. Kristin taught Spanish here 1 1/2 years ago. As many know, Kristin now lives in Ireland and is teaching from there via Skype. Through the help of the Technology Committee and other teachers who are willing to monitor these classes, this endeavor seems to be working well.

Matt Elzinga has been hired to a part-time position. Matt will be the 1st hour monitor for the Spanish class and will also make sure the Skype connection is working correctly. Matt will also be teaching a computer programming class for one semester, a computer applications class for one semester and assisting in the Technology Department.

Earlier this summer the Ed. Comm. hired Tyler Schimmel to be the Varsity Boys basketball coach after James Haveman stepped down. Tyler takes over the Varsity job after serving many years as JV coach. Tom Pastoor was hired to replace Tyler as JV coach. Tom coached 9th grade basketball at Heritage and was hired to coach the

Freshman team at Covenant 2 years ago. With Tyler and Tom moving up to Varsity and JV positions, we were left with a coaching vacancy at the Freshman level. Doug Kaptein has been hired as the Freshman coach. Doug has been officiating high school basketball for many years and also coached Covenant's JV girls soccer team this past spring. We welcome Doug to the coaching staff.

As we begin a new school year with some new teachers, coaches and students, we thank God that his Covenant faithfulness to us has not changed. He has continued to make it possible for us to teach His covenant seed in this school in such a way that His name is given glory. The Board asks for your continued support through prayers and gifts that we may continue to carry out our covenant calling in this school.

FROM THE ENROLLMENT COMMITTEE
Dave Moelker, Chairman



The Enrollment Committee was busy again this past summer with meeting the new families' affiliated with Covenant. This academic year we welcomed 26 new families. We rejoice in the continued growth of our student body. May His Providential wisdom guide our children in this step of their life.

Eric and Tricia Bouma (Madalyn) Byron Center
Dan and Jean Bylsma (Brittany) Trinity
Ben and Liz Cammenga (Tyler) Grandville
Aaron and Molly Cleveland (Justin) Hope
Chris and Laura Dykstra (Carter) Holland
Eric and Cara Dykstra (Erica) Hudsonville
Terry and Tracy Dykstra (Collin) Trinity
Kevin and Pam Gunnink (Brandon) Byron Center
Carl and Cristy Kalsbeek (Mackenzie) Faith
Dan and Tamara Kalsbeek (Allen) Hope
Brian and Karen Kuiper (Ross) Trinity
Victor and Lisa Kuiper (Nicholas) South East
David and Dawn Meulenberg (Carson) Grace
Jeff and Jocelyn Miedema (Levi) Hudsonville
Heather Mowery (Tori) Providence
Rev. David and Rebecca Overway (Joseph) Hope
Geoff and Sherri Penna (Joshua) Georgetown
Nathan and Tanya Pipe (Breanne) South East
Mike and Teresa Potjer (Annika, Cassandra, Zachary) Faith
Dave and Gwen Pryor (Kim) Kalamazoo
Dave and Jaime Ritsema (Clayton) Georgetown
Jason and Tamara Scholten (Whitney) Faith
Brent and Alisa Snippe (Natalie) South East
Jay and Heidi Van Baren (Zachary) Faith
Jim and Kim Van Dyke (Josie) Grandville



Paula Kuiper I am the daughter of Steve and Deb. My family and I are members of Southwest PRC. I recently graduated from Calvin College and am now working as the director for the Academic Support program at Covenant Christian High School. Covenant has grown a lot since I was a student here, Academic Support included. I am thankful for all the opportunities our growing school is able to provide for its students. It has been a privilege and a

blessing for me to join this school community again, this time as a teacher. I love that praising God with my students and seeking to know Him more are integral parts of my work here.



Gayle Lotterman As a child, growing up in Covenant's backyard meant watching soccer and baseball games from my kitchen window, and travelling the well-worn path from my house through Covenant's grass to walk to Hope School. As a high school student, growing up in Covenant's backyard meant waking up at 8:05 and still making it to school on time. Yet, as a Covenant alumni and recent graduate from college, it is still settling in that I am not just part of Covenant's backyard, but also now a contributor to the Reformed teaching taking place at this school.

In case it wasn't obvious, I grew up in Walker, Michigan, graduating from Hope Protestant Reformed School and Covenant Christian High School. I am a member at Hope Protestant Reformed Church, and my parents are Mike and Grace Lotterman. We do live in the middle of that area we like to call the "Hope Ghetto", and I am finding my commute to Covenant as nice as it was when I was in high school.

This past spring, I received a Bachelor of Science from Grand Valley State University, with a teaching certificate in K-12 Art Education and a minor in Writing. I work two days a week at Covenant and three days a week at Heritage, and am enjoying the classrooms I am part of at both schools. At Covenant, I work in the Academic Support program, where Paula Kuiper, Dorothy Vander Schaaf and I have the privilege of learning from each other and from our students.

While Covenant has grown considerably since I attended high school, the atmosphere has remained much the same. The focus Covenant places on a Reformed education amazes me even more as a teacher than it did as a student. I've learned so much already, and look forward to continually growing both as a teacher and in the body of Christ the rest of this school year.



Matt Elzinga Hello! I have been asked to tell you a little about myself. You may have seen me around the halls over the past few years doing some tech work or sitting in on a band rehearsal. This will be my first year teaching at Covenant. I am thankful that God has led me here and given me the opportunity to work alongside many of my former teachers.

This year, I am teaching a new introductory course in Computer Programming. This is the first time in several years that Covenant has offered a programming course, and I am very excited to get this course going. In addition, I will be teaching Computer Apps, doing daily tech maintenance to support our school's computer needs, and working with Mrs. Crossett to coordinate our long-distance Spanish program.

I received my bachelor's degree in Computer Science from Grand Valley in 2009, and I have been working as a programmer for the past 9 years. I have also spent the last 3 years teaching band at Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School, and will continue to teach band and choir at Hope every afternoon this year, Lord willing.

My parents are Bob and Vicki Elzinga, and they and I are members at Grace Protestant Reformed Church. I attended Hope and Covenant growing up, and I am thankful to God and to my parents that they sacrificed in order to send me and my sisters to good Christian schools. At Covenant, we experience the tremendous blessing of the communion of the saints, which is evident everywhere from the teacher's lounge to the hallways to the classrooms.

This communion is especially noticeable in the way the teachers are willing to collaborate and help one another. Mr. Kamper has been an incredible help to me as I have been learning how to teach band at Hope. Mr. Gritters is doing the same for me now in choir. (If you're ever wondering why I occasionally sit in during choir, this is why.) And many other teachers at Covenant have given me excellent advice for the new programming class. I am thankful for everyone's willingness to help me get started at Covenant, and I can't wait to see how the year goes!



FALL FESTIVAL

We had beautiful weather, excellent food, and fun activities at the Fall Festival held October 11. Many families enjoyed the wagon and pony rides, crafts and games. It was wonderful to see such a variety of ages participating in activities here at the High School. The festival opens the school to our supporters and lets our families and teachers get to know each other in a relaxed casual atmosphere. This event is more than just a great fund-raiser for the senior class, it gives kids a chance to see the fun side of school. A special thanks to the Senior Class and its advisors, Eric Gritters, Joel Minderhoud and Dan Kuiper for providing us with this fun filled family activity.



PURPLE OUT



There was a sea of purple among the students at the soccer and volleyball games on Tuesday, Oct. 7. The student council for the second year held a fund-raising event to support medical research at the Van Andel Institute. The Grand Rapids based research institute has a fund-raising campaign that encourages schools to raise funds for research into cancer and Parkinson's disease and other neuro-degenerative disorders. The color purple is meant to symbolize and celebrate cancer survivors. Part of the PURPLE OUT is a Commemoration Wall on which you can put the names of your loved ones to celebrate cancer survivors, honor cancer patients, and remember those no longer with us.



FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
Keith Noorman, Chairman



The Finance Committee has been busy with its various duties early in this school year. What a blessing it is for us to have such a place as CCHS to be able to educate our children and to have supporting families who are committed to making sure that the financial obligations of the school are met.

Collecting and tracking tuition payments is the most important task that must be handled each and every month. It is very important that families stay current with their tuition at the beginning of the school year to avoid falling too far behind. At the end of October, families should have at least 30% of their current year's tuition paid. If you are not at that point and you find that you will have trouble staying current with your tuition, please contact a member of the Finance Committee.

We have once again been blessed this year to be able to issue tuition grants to various families at CCHS. For the past 16 years or so, CCHS has received very generous financial gifts which help us fund these grants. To be considered for a tuition grant, families that qualify must fill out a confidential application, which is then forwarded to the Tuition Grant Committee (which is independent of the Finance Committee). These grants are always a huge relief to families that are looking at very large tuition bills in the coming year. The Finance Committee would like to see this Tuition Grant Program continue into the future, but to do so, we need the help and support from our constituents. If you are looking for other ways to donate to CCHS and would like your donation to go directly to offset the tuition of families in need at CCHS, please mark your donations to be

applied to the Tuition Grant Fund.

Shortly, we will be beginning our annual support drive. The purpose of the support drive is to supplement the tuition as another source of revenue for the school. The support drive also gives an opportunity for those who do not have children at CCHS to contribute to the operations of the school. This generous support allows the Board to keep tuition at affordable rates for our tuition paying families. We have increased our goal for this year to \$270,000. If you do not receive any forms for this drive, please contact the office to request them.

In this issue of the *Courier* is a financial report for the latest fiscal year of the school (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014). This report shows the year's actual revenue and expenses, the budgeted revenue and expenses for that year, and the differences between those two columns. As you can see, our revenues for last year amounted to about \$2,316,000 and our expenses were about \$2,258,000 which left us with a surplus for the year of \$58,596. We thank the tuition paying families at CCHS and the other supporters of the school for helping to ensure that our expenses are covered by timely tuition payments and generous contributions. We also thank those responsible for controlling our expenses and being good stewards of the great financial resources that God has granted us as a school.

Finally, we ask for your prayers for our committee and the Board as we are called to manage the finances of CCHS in a way that is in accordance with God's will and for the benefit of covenant education.



Kristin Crossett graduated from Grand Valley State University with a degree in Secondary education, a major in Spanish, and a minor in Mathematics. During her university years she studied in both Spain and Guatemala, using her major as an excuse to explore the world. On a side trip from her studies in Spain she met David Crossett in Northern Ireland who she started dating a few years later and then married in 2013. She has been involved in Covenant for years, first as a student, then as a volunteer, and finally as a teacher for the semester before she moved to Northern Ireland. She is still living in Northern Ireland, but teaching via Skype our Spanish I and II classes. Doing so gives her a good excuse to visit family and friends in the USA while still living close enough to Europe to satisfy her travel bug on quick trips to new places like Denmark, Scotland, and the Canary Islands (her most recent travels). Kristin and David are members of Covenant Protestant Reformed Church in Ballymena, Northern Ireland.

Covenant Christian High School
Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual
 July 2013 through June 2014

	Jul '13 - Jun 14	Budget	\$ Over Budget
Income			
4110 · Tuition	1,840,989.23	1,858,500.00	-17,510.77
4200 · Church Collections	60,534.35	52,500.00	8,034.35
4300 · Pledges & gifts	309,769.54	260,000.00	49,769.54
4350 · CCHS Foundation Receipts	23,494.00	21,500.00	1,994.00
4450 · Special Education Receipts	75,157.14	88,500.00	-13,342.86
4600 · Miscellaneous Receipts	5,676.49	5,500.00	176.49
4604 · Interest Income	802.17	0.00	802.17
Total Income	2,316,422.92	2,286,500.00	29,922.92
Expense			
5010 · Teaching & administration	1,141,165.76	1,152,800.00	-11,634.24
5020 · Custodial services	54,810.15	54,810.00	0.15
5030 · Substitute Teachers	670.00	500.00	170.00
5035 · Teacher Assistants	22,611.74	22,200.00	411.74
5040 · Office Staff	25,897.24	27,500.00	-1,602.76
5050 · Athletic Director & Coaches	47,062.41	47,600.00	-537.59
5110 · Payroll Taxes	94,851.07	104,400.00	-9,548.93
5110.1 · Payroll taxes - custodial	4,145.00	4,200.00	-55.00
5120 · Group insurance coverage	204,000.00	204,000.00	0.00
5121 · Medical expenses - Rx copays	36,000.00	36,000.00	0.00
5125 · Teachers' Retirement expense	31,130.91	41,200.00	-10,069.09
5130 · Workers' compensation insurance	5,260.00	4,800.00	460.00
5135 · Special Education	106,822.53	114,100.00	-7,277.47
6000 · Utilities	60,969.48	80,000.00	-19,030.52
6025 · Water improvements assessment	4,555.08	4,300.00	255.08
6030 · Telephone	5,396.45	6,000.00	-603.55
6040 · General insurance	13,343.00	15,000.00	-1,657.00
6050 · Janitorial supplies	7,078.40	10,700.00	-3,621.60
6060 · Snow removal	5,200.00	4,500.00	700.00
6062 · Trash removal	1,117.38	1,000.00	117.38
6065 · Grounds maintenance	15,785.03	12,000.00	3,785.03
6070 · General maintenance	45,197.22	40,000.00	5,197.22
6080 · Major maintenance program	48,000.00	47,950.00	50.00
6090 · Building furnishings	2,151.00	2,500.00	-349.00
6110 · Teaching aids & supplies	11,466.64	13,000.00	-1,533.36
6120 · Educational equipment	17,500.00	17,500.00	0.00
6122 · Technology fund	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00
6130 · Physical education equipment	447.57	1,000.00	-552.43
6140 · Library	4,100.00	4,100.00	0.00
6145 · Copier replacement	2,300.00	2,300.00	0.00
6150 · Science lab supplies	5,975.05	6,000.00	-24.95
6160 · Equipment repair & replacement	2,386.92	3,000.00	-613.08
6170 · Teachers' development	12,546.37	11,000.00	1,546.37
6180 · Music	4,179.48	2,550.00	1,629.48
6190 · Band instruments	3,079.50	3,050.00	29.50
6210 · Transportation expenses	3,841.61	5,000.00	-1,158.39
6220 · Office supplies	6,441.14	6,500.00	-58.86
6222 · Equipment service contracts	8,878.51	10,000.00	-1,121.49
6225 · Publicity & printing cost	1,722.95	2,500.00	-777.05
6230 · Postage	5,200.54	4,000.00	1,200.54
6240 · Federation dues	2,020.81	2,300.00	-279.19
6245 · Graduation expenses	3,298.08	3,500.00	-201.92
6250 · Accounting fees	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00
6260 · Miscellaneous expenses	5,221.63	7,140.00	-1,918.37
6300 · Property Acquisition	50,000.00	20,000.00	30,000.00
6310 · Debt obligations - facilities	105,000.00	105,000.00	0.00
Total Expense	2,257,826.65	2,286,500.00	-28,673.35
Net Income	58,596.27	0.00	58,596.27

Curriculum Enrichment and Development

In the early years of CCHS a need was found to assist teachers with the development of curriculum material that was specific to their classes. The Curriculum Enrichment and Development Fund was set up to provide funding to the teacher as they worked to develop their current courses or new courses in the curriculum. Originally this program

was funded through annual donations. In the early 1990's, the school received a gift of approximately \$225,000 that was to be invested as an endowment with the annual proceeds to provide funding for the CED program and educational equipment or other physical needs of the school. The intention of the donor was to have a source of income that would help a teacher extend the amount of time that was worked, on behalf of the school program, into the summer months. Our CED program now provides funding to help teachers develop their courses or work on enrichment activities for their courses. These activities also then help the teacher develop in their work. In essence there are three main goals: develop curriculum materials and teaching helps for our classes, develop knowledge and skills of teachers by having them do work in their field of teaching, provide a source of income for those who would like to be more involved in the work course development at CCHS.

Joel Minderhoud - Science Olympiad

Each summer I try to work on a Curriculum Enrichment or Curriculum Development (CED) project. This summer was no different, in that regard. However, this year's project was a bit different than those of other years in that one part of my project did not directly relate to my own courses. I spent part of my CED time this summer investigating what would be involved in coaching and sponsoring a Science Olympiad program at CCHS. I researched how other schools run their Science Olympiad programs and how often they meet with their students to coach them towards the Regional Science Olympiad competition (held at GVSU in March each year). Included in this research was an investigation of the kinds of activities that are often a part of the Science Olympiad program. Although I was unable to obtain the specific rules for each event, the event titles give a pretty good indication of the kind of knowledge and skills that would be needed. With titles such as, "Air Trajectory"; "Bridge Build"; "Bungee Jump"; "Wright Stuff"; "WIDI"; "Entomology"; and "Compound Machines" there is a variety of topics for students to investigate.

After much research, I have concluded that it looks feasible for CCHS to offer a Science Olympiad extra-curricular program in the future. One of the next phases to prepare for a program to possibly begin in the Fall of 2015 is to acquire mentors to help in various areas. Such a program, like our Robotics program, is only as successful as the help we receive from parents and friends of the school who have an ability and interest in Science. Thanks to our many mentors!

If you are interested in helping guide students to prepare for various events in the Science Olympiad program, contact Mr. Minderhoud at jminderhoud@covenantchristianhs.org.



Eric Pols - Flipped Classroom

The CED project for Algebra I Concepts and Skills was used to start the development of a flipped classroom, further develop the use of standards-based grading, and integrate technology.

The flipped classroom switches the traditional roles of class time and homework. For homework, students are assigned to watch a short online video of the teacher and take notes. Time in class can be used to work on exercises from the book and additional projects that are completed before the final assessment for the unit. This time in class allows for individual and group assistance from the teacher. Students can also work together to help each other with understanding. The additional projects are applications of the concepts learned during each unit.

Standards-based grading helps to focus learning by having specific goals or learning objectives for each unit. I was able to update assessments to be focused on individual goals so students can receive feedback on their level of understanding. Students can then study to develop their understanding on specific goals. Each student knows where their knowledge level is at because assessments are divided carefully by assessing one goal at a time.

All the materials for class (except assessments) are posted online using a learning management system called Schoology. The students use Google chromebooks each day to check for assignments, view videos, and complete projects using Google Docs, Google Sheets, and other online websites.



Rick DeVries - 1 to 1 Pilot Program

The work that I was able to complete this summer was to gather and organize resources to assist in the change of the Advance Modern World History Course that formerly existed into a 20th / 21st Century World History course geared for 11th or 12th graders. This project was a total revamp of the course with many new web-based activities and materials. To start the project there were meetings with others in the department to make sure that we were all on the same page.

Now, as a history major, a student will leave their World Survey course 9th grade and pick up this new course in 11th grade. We don't want to have all the same topics and activities within the history department. We discussed this project as a History Department and this project was deemed necessary and vital to the furtherance of our department goals. The goal is to also have this be a pilot course for a 1:1 program with utilizing google chromebooks in most class periods.





Covenant Christian High School was blessed with three Valedictorians in the graduating Class of 2014. We thank these talented young ladies for their years of dedication and sharing with us **excerpts** from their speeches below. All three achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA.

Davinia Lotterman

The Covenant Christian High School Class of 2014 welcomes all of you to our Graduation tonight.

Thirteen years ago we began our

journey, Adamites and Heritites, Hopites and East Siders. Now here we are on the night of our graduation, already done with high school! As sophomores coming into Covenant, we didn't really know each other well enough to make memories, but junior year was the year when we began to open up and find new friends. Senior year was a year of beginnings. We grew much closer as a class through class trips, bonfires, chapels, and open houses. We came to know each other as fellow members of the body of Christ, and have grown together as Christian friends.

The journey of high school was not always easy. There were trials, tribulations, and difficulties along the way. Our daily activities sometimes became tiring, weighing us down with the cares and worries of this world. We were challenged with questions such as "What will I do with the rest of my life? How can I learn to deal with all the stress of being an adult? Will the world accept me for who I am? And who am I, really? "

The baggage of this world is heavy, but we know that He leads us, and keeps us from falling. He carries us close to His heart, and surely His goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our lives. I pray that we, as the graduating class of 2014, leave Covenant Christian High School aware of the most important thing, more important than grades or majors or sports . Our focus in life, the center of our worldview, is and should always be our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Emily Langerak

Tonight we are gathered to witness the official ending of the school year and the beginning of a much anticipated summer break. In just minutes, the class of 2014 will walk up these steps to accept their diplomas, a piece of paper that is a summation of three years of memories: of laughter and tears, test taking, lab reports, poster projects, lunches in the hallway, and chapels in the gym. With this, emotions are rushing through many of us tonight.

The basis of the teaching at Covenant Christian High School is the relationship of friendship God has with believers and their seed. It is a relationship of mutual love and deep knowledge of one another. Because knowledge is such an important part of this relationship, God has commanded parents to teach all their children diligently in the fear of Him. Our Christian schools, and specifically Covenant Christian High School, carry out of a significant part of this calling. The basis of our high school is not, therefore, simply a dislike of the sin abounding in other schools, nor is it an attempt

at giving our children the best education possible, but the basis and whole purpose of our high school is that our children continue to be educated in the doctrine of God's Word as a demand of the covenant.

Throughout my years at Covenant, I have seen this covenant education in a unique way every day. It can be said of each teacher here tonight that they took the time to turn the focus of each lesson on God and his word. Mr. Pols helped his (Geometry?) class see that the Fibonacci sequence is not just some abstract math principle but a design God skillfully incorporated throughout creation. Miss Knott gave her Senior English class the chance to write an article for the Beacon Lights on a doctrinal topic they felt strongly about. I, personally, was steered in the right direction by Covenant's guidance counselor. In the words of Mr. Haveman to me, "There is absolutely nothing wrong with being an intelligent mother. It is not a waste, no matter what people say." Mr. Bergman repeatedly pointed out to his FST class the awesome power of God in designing the standard normal curve with the ability to describe anything normally distributive from ACT scores to the height of the male population. Mr. Lanning made plain God's magnitude by explaining the intricate workings of human body, leaving the class wondering in astonishment how anyone could ever deny His hand in creation. And these are only a few examples. Much more could be said about Covenant's education because every teacher has in some way incorporated Reformed principles into his or her class.



Alyssa Scholten

As we leave this school and move forward, there are three challenges set before us.

First, we must hold on to this education we have received. We are leaving the sheltered box that is Covenant Christian High School. Some of us have spent our 3 years inside the walls of this box, terrified of what lies beyond. Others of us at times may have felt constrained by this box, spending all 3 years pounding on the walls, anxious to break free. But the box has stood firm, protecting us from the world around us and nurturing us. Now, it's time for us to leave. This does not mean, however, that we abandon this box. The box merely changes roles—before it was a shield guarding us from the outside world, now it is a foundation on which we build the rest of our lives. We must use this foundation. We must continue to recognize God's hand working in each and every thing around us and continue to apply Biblical principles to the things we learn and experience. As a song that one of the choirs sang last week instructs, "Hold onto your ways, with shields of faith, against temptations fleeting arrows." We must hold on to this wonderful gift of reformed education that we have been blessed with. We mustn't forget the lessons we've learned and the values that have been instilled into us.

Along with this big change approaching, we are sure to encounter a whole new level of freedom and a whole new set of temptations that go along with that freedom. This leads to the second challenge before us today. Every Friday of sophomore year, as we would walk out of the Cults classroom, Mr. Haveman would say, "Remember who you are." And further, as one of our classmates added, "Remember Whose you are." What a great reminder. We must take that with us. Whenever we face a challenge, a temptation, a trial, that should come to our minds—"Remember who you are and Whose you are"—a child of God. We must be witnesses to those around us and act as children of God. That must be our first identity, and the way we live should testify of that.

And, graduating class, there is one final challenge set before us tonight. We must not fear what lies before us. Yes, our futures are unknown, and though that is exciting, it is also very frightening. In the midst of this uncertainty, we must trust in the Lord. We may be scared of what lies ahead of us, but we are comforted knowing that our Savior will be leading each and every one of us. The song, "Still, My Soul Be Still" addresses this fear of change when it states "Still, my soul be still, and do not fear though winds of change may rage tomorrow. God is at your side." And winds of change are raging. We are headed off in different directions. New teachers, students, co-workers, courses, temptations, and challenges await us. As our class text Joshua 1:9 states, "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." We are commanded to not be afraid, because the Lord is with us. Yes, winds of change are raging, and this is just the beginning of the storm. Yes, we will grow apart from each other. For some of us, this could be the last time we see many of our classmates. But in the midst of all this change and all the unknowns, we must remember that our Savior has led us all the way, and all the way He will continue to lead us.



**ART
students
discovering
their
talents!**



Why don't we have. . . ?

- Why don't we have a trainer?
- We should get an outdoor batting cage.
- Why don't we get new bleachers here?

This is just a sample of the questions and comments that are heard at athletic events. The short answer to most of these questions is cost.

Athletics plays an important role in our school community. It gives our young people an opportunity to compete at a high level. It gives our students and supporters an opportunity to gather together in support of our athletes and our school. Athletics gives our students, faculty, alumni, constituents, and our families an opportunity to come together as a "school community". Covenant is a "good place to be". I believe that most people reading this article can look back on positive high school experiences as an athlete, a parent, a grandparent, or as a fan.

In the last five years, Athletics expenses have increased, while revenue has decreased. Expenses have increased with the addition of the 9th grade. Since adding 9th grade we have added three freshman teams, and three JV teams. These additional teams bring with them more opportunities for our athletes, but also more officials fees, uniform expense, equipment expense, and tournament entry fees. The amount that we pay for each tournament, official, and uniform has also increased through the years. Ticket prices have remained the same over the past 5 years. We have tried very hard to make attendance affordable for our students and our families.

The question is: How do we increase revenue? How do we decrease expenses?

- Options for increasing revenue: 1) Raise ticket and season pass prices 2) Pay-to-play 3) Fund-raising
- Options for decreasing expenses: 1) Cut sub-varsity teams 2) Play fewer games 3) Athletes bring their own equipment

Obviously, these are not the only options, but these are some of the things that we must consider. The majority of schools in Michigan assess an Athletic Participation Fee. The fee ranges anywhere from \$25 to \$250. Covenant has avoided assessing the fee, and we do not want to go down that road in the future. At this point, we believe that the best option is to raise revenue through fund-raising efforts by the Booster Club. As we go forward into the Winter sports seasons, watch for information on Booster Club meetings and activities, and take the time to get involved with our school, so we can continue to meet our needs and further develop our facilities.

Athletics is a great part of our school, not only for our students, but for all of our school supporters. Let's fill the gym this basketball season.

The Boys soccer team took first place in the River Valley Conference for the 3rd straight season. The team won the district with an 8-1 victory over Calvin Christian. In an intense, back-and-forth game at the Regional Finals, the team knocked off Kalamazoo Hackett to advance to the Semifinals. The team squared off against West Michigan Christian and advanced to the finals with a 3-1 victory. In the finals, Covenant fell to Birmingham Roeper by a score of 4-2. It was a great effort, and a great season for Coach Mike Noorman and the soccer team.



The Boys Cross Country Team won regionals for the first time since 2004 with 5 of the 7 runners finishing in the top 20. From the Girls team, Emily Schipper also qualified to run at the State Meet. Congrats to Coach Kalsbeek and the teams on another great season.