



Pathways

Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths. Ps. 25:4

A Newsletter for Holden Christian Academy

January 16, 2014

Principal's Corner

Dear friends,

I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that "your children are acting like siblings"...the bad news is that "your children are acting like siblings!" If you have been at HCA long enough, you have probably heard me say these words in January or February. They are true every year. The school year has a very predictable pattern.

Term 1: We all start off excited, a little intimidated, and polite. It's a time of huge adjustments: new people, new backpacks, greater expectations, different sleep patterns, more sitting....etc. We review last year's work and the staff assesses everyone. (They really can tell who did their summer reading!) Then just as everyone settles down into new work and expectations and making real progress... term two happens!

Term 2 usually starts very well but is extremely disjointed overall. It's not just the Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks but more so it's the preparation for Thanksgiving and Christmas that get us off kilter. We eat too much...sleep too little...perhaps struggle with a bug or cold, and some may get a little stressed :-). We get disconnected from regular life and then, BOOM, we are all back at school in January... but it's not in the same spirit of September.

In January the glow of new friendships and teachers has dimmed and everyone looks and acts more like their authentic selves- good, bad and ugly. We are no longer intimidated and excited. Rather, we are light-deprived, tired, and a little depressed. By the time we get home from school it is almost dark and the frigid weather doesn't help. This is the time of year when I am called on with greater frequency to settle student squabbles and staff concerns.

Students (and even adults) are a little off and are looking for someone to blame. That irritating kid next to them looks like a good candidate and we're off! Certainly bullying is nothing to take lightly and if your child complains over a week or so about it, definitely bring it to the teacher's attention. I have been alerted to the possibility of bullying many times at HCA and 98% of the time it turns out to be mutual bugging, commenting, or aggravating. Both parties feel like victims who are just responding to the other's initiative.

Often kids (and adults for that matter) are unequipped to make it stop and so require adult intervention. My usual approach is to get both parties together and give each a chance to state their case, uninterrupted by the other. Almost without exception the complaints are very similar.

Each assumes the other is the initiator and they are just the responder or innocent victim. I draw a picture of a vicious cycle for them and explain how these behaviors could go on forever if there is not a mutual truce or start over point. I ask them if they'd like that opportunity (to date all parties have responded positively) and I draw up a truce treaty or contract. Both parties must look one another in the eye, apologize for their participation and forgive the others. They then shake hands or hug. They are warned that the next person who does something mean is the instigator so don't be that person. I have had amazing results using this method and almost always both parties are relieved.

Why am I telling you all this? Because, I care about you and your family who are in the trenches! As a mother of much older children, I am out of the trenches and can see the big picture. It is comforting and helpful to know that the problems and complaints of mid-winter are normal, expected, treatable and short-lived. I want to encourage you so you can take the offense with your own kids and de-escalate issues when they occur. How? As you all well know, the entire picture is not being painted for you. Ask many follow-up questions such as, "What were you doing just before that happened?" or "Why do you think he/she might have done something like that?" or "What do you think the other child is reporting to their parents right now?" We all put ourselves in the best light and look/feel wonderfully innocent until the other has a chance to paint the rest of the picture.

I also ask students for demonstrations or role-plays. You would be amazed how "he hit me" or "she yelled at me" or "he pushed or kicked me" has been acted out in my office. Trust me...it's often not at all what you pictured! Humans love hyperbole and exaggeration is part of who we are, especially in a conflict situation. If we struggle with it as adults, why should we assume immature children would do any better?

One other tip...get your child OUTSIDE! Winter is a fabulous time to go for a walk, play, and have some non-directed fun with friends. Snow is free play material from God. Fresh air, connecting with God's natural world, and exercise all make a huge difference in our outlooks. God bless you all. Hang in; it's not easy! The good news is that term three is on its way and there are reasons why it's my favorite term. Stay tuned for updates on term three!

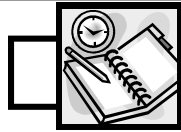
Blessings,
Susan Hayward, Principal

K-8 Field Trip Tuesday
Boston Museum of Science
Arrive HCA 8:00; return to HCA 4:30 p.m.

Our Mission ~

To challenge children to a lifetime of learning, working in partnership with families, to integrate Biblical truth with academic pursuits.

Holden Christian Academy
508-829-4418
www.holdenchristianacademy.org



HCA Calendar

January 17	NO SCHOOL—Term 3 Development Day
January 20	NO SCHOOL—Martin Luther King Jr. Day
January 21	Museum of Science Field Trip K-8
January 24	Term 2 ends
January 31	Used Book Sale
February 6	7 p.m. Every Family Bring a Family Open House
May 31	Save the date! HCA 20th birthday party! (Rain date June 7)

Fridays: ice cream sales after lunch, \$1 each.

PRAYER (Psalm 68:19)

- For our family members struggling with illness during the winter season.
- For new families being called to HCA, that they will hear God's call and trust in Him.

PRAISE & THANK YOU

- Thank you to the Parent Teacher Council for coordinating the Book Sale and helping with the Read-a-thon.
- Thank you to all who have signed up as chaperones for our Museum of Science field trip next week!

**Mark your calendars
and spread the word!
Every Family Bring a Family
Open House
February 6**

February 6 is our next Every Family Bring a Family Open House, at 7:00 p.m. Bring your friends and give them a tour; they'll get to meet the staff and learn about HCA.

If they apply and are accepted, and name you as their referral, you will receive a check for \$100!

A flyer is attached for you and more are available in the office. Please post this flyer in your local library, supermarket, dance studio, etc. Word of mouth is our greatest form of advertising.

Principal's Book of Excellence celebrates...

Grade 1

Danny K., for his thoughtful prayers.
Erik, for putting effort into reading ~ keep it up!
Michaela, for her beautiful handwriting.
Will, for excellent work on a journal entry.

Grade 3

Alison and Nate, for making an effort to keep the classroom clean and encouraging others to do the same.
Brianna, for sharing snacks with others who have none.
Hannah, for being an excellent example of working quietly in class.

Thank you to all who helped...

"Thank you so very much for all the prayers and help that was given to our family during the last month! Every day the kids would come home and tell me the particular people (on different days) were praying for me. When I was at my worst I can't tell you how encouraging it was to me, because I know that Jesus is the ultimate healer! So many have blessed us. Thanks!"

Used book donations needed!

As part of the Read-A-Thon, the Parent Teacher Council will be hosting the annual "Used Book Sale" on January 31! We will be collecting donations of gently used books at drop-off and pick-up next week! Student Council members will be outside collecting book donations directly from your car Wednesday 1/22, Thursday 1/23, and Friday 1/24. Please send in children's books (baby, easy readers, intermediate, fiction, non-fiction) and adult books (coffee table books, tasteful fiction, non-fiction, etc). More information will be published shortly about the sale itself; thank you, in advance, for cleaning out those bookshelves & donating books next week!!!



Square 1 Art ~ thank you!

We received a check today from Square 1 Art for \$836.61; thank you for your orders which help with our fund-raising efforts!

Did you know that Square1Art orders can be made all year long and HCA gets 15% of any purchases? Email Mrs. M at pmikolajczyk@holdenchristianacademy.org if you need your child's access code.

Museum of Science Field Trip Schedule

Leave HCA by 8:30 a.m. the latest.

11:00 a.m. Lunch period #1

11:30 a.m. Flight of the Butterfly movie, grades K-3

12:00 p.m. Lunch period #2

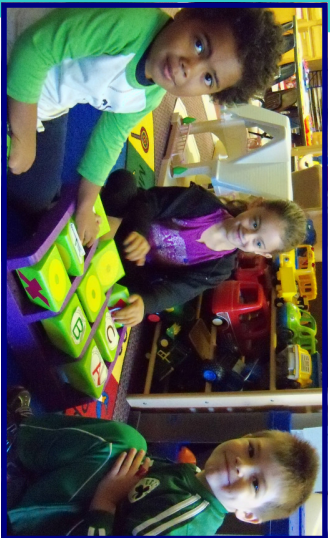
12:00, 12:15, 12:30 p.m. Butterfly Walk groups, grades K-3

1:00 p.m. Jerusalem movie, Grades 4-8

3:00 p.m. Depart museum; arrive HCA approx. 4:30 p.m.

~Open House~ Holden Christian Academy

Preschool-8th Grade



**Feb. 6, 2014
at 7:00 PM**

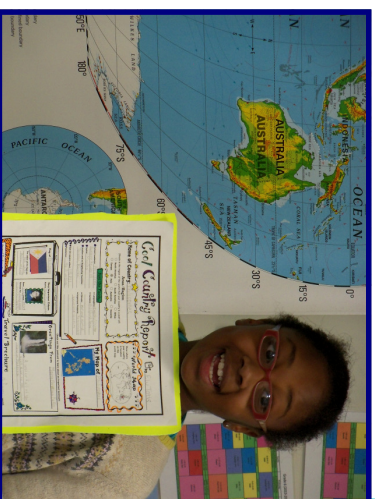
***Tour the school
&
meet our staff***



279 Reservoir Street, at Holden Chapel
www.holdenchristianacademy.org



*Love God ...
love kids ...
love learning!*



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