

Update: June 2017

Our year is rapidly drawing to a close and we would like to give you some important updates!

Our Time in our Temporary Homes

It has been a busy but very productive year at our three sites. Parents, students and staff made many adjustments and proved themselves to be adaptable and flexible, all the while remaining positive. Staff worked hard to create connections and unity between the three campuses through shared efforts on events, like: All School Write, Celebrating Canada's 150th through Discovery Days, all-school Christmas concert at Glad Tidings, chapels, curriculum, activity sharing--the list goes on. Teachers and staff also came together once a month to collaborate and plan. We are grateful to our church hosts for their graciousness and cooperation, and we thank for your continued prayers as we live through the transition period.

The New Building

We hope you are checking our website periodically to watch the progress! In spite of a few excavation challenges (ex. Huge rocks, snow, etc.), the building is finally rising from the ground. The new building reflects 21st Century Learning and making the most of our west coast style and spirit.

- **The Chapel:** small, intimate gathering place hidden behind our vintage stained glass window
- **The Setting:** urban, accessible, surrounded by beauty and green spaces
- **The School Grounds:** natural rock play spaces, rain gardens, places to sit, learn, play and just be.
- **The Building Design:** built to let in maximum light, take in the inspiring view and enhance the neighbourhood
- **Flexible Learning Spaces:** moveable walls inside classrooms and breakout spaces for quiet or collaborative work
- **The Learning Commons:** the heart of the school, with flexible spaces and inner rooms for students to learn, think, research, collaborate and create
- **Technology:** flexible and seamlessly integrated into all learning spaces
- **The Gyms:** spaces for play, competition, theatre and chapels
- **Specialty Rooms:** art studio, science centre, fully equipped server, music and band rooms, gathering spaces for students
- **The Rooftop:** a place to learn, garden, be inspired, host, exhibit and hang out



Welcoming New Carver Staff

We are delighted to welcome back many former VCS teachers who now work at Carver, as well as some new faces, for 2018 - 2019. We have already begun the process of getting to know each other and working together as a team. VCS is also happy to announce that Mrs. Grace Voo, who has worked at Carver for the past 12 years, will become the principal for our high school. Her considerable experience and skills will ensure a strong start for our high school program.

Gathering Information and Input

VCS is a school that values input and collaboration! Through the past four months, we have gathered input from parents and staff via four surveys, and look forward to including students

in decision-making in the near future. The most striking feature of all our surveys was the very high level of satisfaction and support for our school. Below are some highlights:

Parents and Staff value:

- Staying centred on our faith, ensuring this remains our number one distinctive
- Our ethos and school culture
- Our excellent teaching staff and leadership
- Enrichment opportunities
- Strong focus on science, math, IT and the arts
- Improved overall PE program
- Thoughtful development of the use of technology
- High school missions trips
- Distinctive middle school grouping
- A strong, positive transition to a K - 12 school
- Cohesion between VCS and Carver staff and program
- More streamlined communication

How we are responding:

- VCS and Carver already have the same mission, vision and values created together several years ago. We are specifically unpacking and developing this further together to create cohesion and consistency.
- We will be formalizing our after and before school enrichment program for Grades 1 - 8.
- The new BC curriculum is built to allow enrichment to take place within the classroom.
- Our combined Carver/VCS IT committee has already developed a strong foundation and plan for the next 3 - 5 years.
- We have hired an elementary PE teacher who will work with our high school PE teacher to develop a consistent and strong program for body and mind from K - 12.
- We are excited to strategically plan our Christian studies curriculum, beginning at kindergarten, to culminate in grade 11 missions trips.
- VCS will develop and build on its excellent middle school model, bringing together the best ideas for Grades 6 - 8 from both Carver and its own experience.
- Over the next months, our high school program will evolve as the new VCS/Carver team work together.

The Capital Campaign

In our last Hope and a Future newsletter, we reported on some of the ways that our students support our new building. Just a few weeks ago, they were back at it again with our VCS Walk, the three campuses together raising over **\$64 000** towards their new school!! We are so grateful for their enthusiasm and efforts, and look forward to the not-so-distant future when we will all, K - 12, be together in our new space. Overall, the campaign continues at a steady pace; with the Walk included, our current total of gifts and pledges received is:

\$3 771 806!!

That's a delightful increase of \$135 000 since our last update to you, *and only \$230 000 away from our milestone for 2017*. Thank you to all of you who made one-time or first-time gifts during the past months and to those of you who extended and added to pledges. If you would like the opportunity to make an additional gift, or to extend your pledge (so far, the farthest forward is 2020!), please just visit our website (vancs.org), or send an email to development@vancouverchristian.org, and we will gladly send you a form.

Let us continue to go forth with gratitude and faith, for we have been richly blessed in this endeavour, and the future looks very bright indeed.

Warmly,



Ellen Freestone,
principal, VCS

