



## SUMMER 2019 ISSUE

### THE END OF REFORMED EDUCATION (1)

JOHN WYNIA, LEAGUE COORDINATOR

This article first appeared in the LRCSS newsletter in May 2019 and is reprinted here with permission.

This is the first of a series of two articles prompted by a statement made in a recent report released by Cardus. In Education Reform in Canada, Cardus' president Michael Van Pelt, states, "All education is public education." The first article will look at the temptation to become "separatist" in our education. The second will look at the "public" nature of Reformed Christian education.

As a child I remember loving the stories of the Old Testament, but there was one thing that was always astounding to me: How could Israel keep falling into idolatry? How could they want to bow down to a god of gold or silver or wood when God kept revealing to them who He was and how powerful He was? As I'm growing older, I'm realizing just how accurate Calvin's words are that our human natures are factories of idols.

In a lecture at the New York Public Library entitled The End of Education, Neil Postman (famed author of Amusing Ourselves to Death) makes the claim that education requires an "end" or "god" to serve or it will come to an end. Postman explains that any educational "end" we might propose could also be thought of as a "god" which was intriguing and challenging to me. One of the potential "ends" for education that Postman mentions in his talk is the end of "multiculturalism" or "separatism." In this story, the "god" that education serves is the "tribe." For multiculturalists, the purpose of education is to further the distinct cultural identity of a particular group. When I heard Postman describe the educational end of "separatism," I immediately thought about our schools. Aren't we here to perpetuate Reformed culture and Reformed identity? This was challenging. Could separatism be a "god" that we might be tempted to serve like the nations around us?

Let's imagine that Postman's "separatism" was the "god" of our schools. What would that look like? What would our mission statements be? What would be our goals for graduates from our institutions?

If we served the god of separatism, we'd want to elevate facets of our own cultural identity to a place of reverence within the school. We'd make sure that the stories of our ancestors and their great works were known by our students. Serving the god of separatism would make it our mission to ensure that our particular culture never dies. We'd want to pass down our own peculiar traditions, our language, dialect, and idioms to our students to ensure that the next generation would be able to continue to do things as they have always been done. And for our graduates, we'd expect them to be able to take up important roles within our culture. We'd want them to serve as our gatekeepers, story-tellers, and leaders. Girls would become mothers of children who carried on the traditions of the tribe—they would learn the language and stories. Boys would become fathers who would find work in the traditional roles held by the tribe so that the sacred tribal identity would never be lost.

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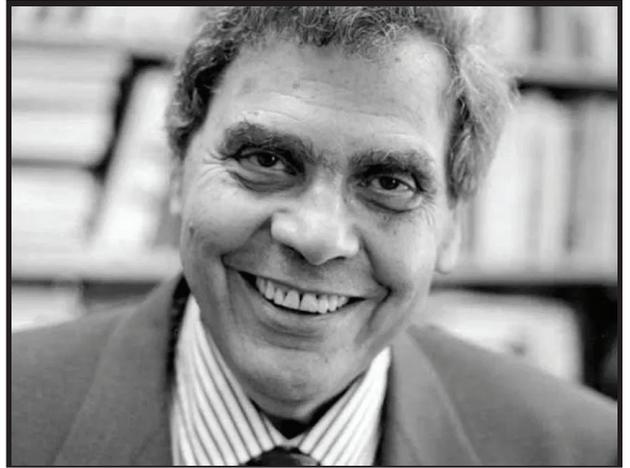
"TRAIN YOURSELF FOR GODLINESS . . ." 1 TIMOTHY 4:7B

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The scary thing about that thought experiment is how well I can relate to it, and how much of it might be mistaken for what we are doing in our schools. Thankfully, the correction for this idolatry is built right into many of our school mission statements. They reflect our understanding that the chief “end” of man is not to perpetuate a particular cultural identity. It is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. This is often expressed in our mission statements by phrases such as “we help students develop their God-given talents to prepare them for a life of service in His kingdom” or “educating God’s covenant children for a life of service to His glory.”

So, what does that look like? How is that different from serving the god of separatism described above? What will our graduates (hopefully) look like? I hope to write more about that in the next issue. For now, I close with this quote from R.C. Sproul:

“John Calvin said it is the task of the church to make the invisible kingdom visible. We do that by living in such a way that we bear witness to the reality of the kingship of Christ in our jobs, our families, our schools, and even our cheque books, because God in Christ is King over every one of these spheres of life. The only way the kingdom of God is going to be manifest in this world before Christ comes is if we manifest it by the way we live as citizens of heaven and subjects of the King” (R.C. Sproul, “What is the Kingdom of God,” Ligonier Blog, 18 June 2018).



*Neil Postman*



*Leg amputation at the Plains of Abraham during the Quebec trip*



*Getting into character?*

“TRAIN YOURSELF FOR GODLINESS . . . ” 1 TIMOTHY 4:7B

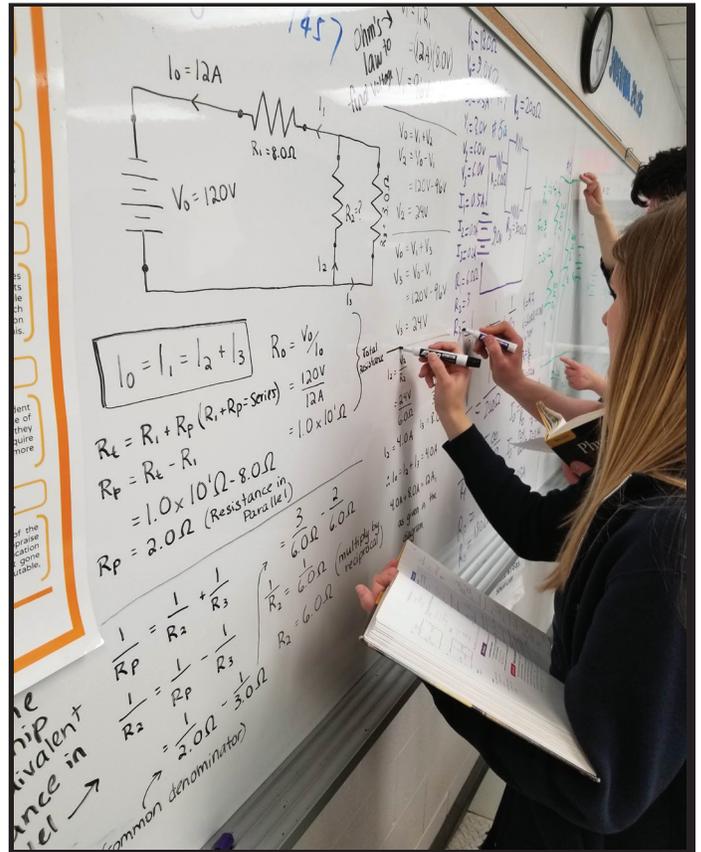
# FROM THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

As we have reported previously, the Library Committee continues to work through its identity crisis realizing that many people in our day, including high school students, read far fewer books than they used to. The committee has been scouring the Library shelves and cabinets with that awareness in mind. Also we seek to continue to be relevant to our students and to the extended PRC community. For example, an excellent resource entitled “The Deacon” was recently donated to our Library. In times past, we would have received a book like that without much discussion and placed it on our shelves. However, there is a very strong likelihood that a book like that is never going to be touched again and so now the discussion continues as to possible better uses for it. The related debate continued in earnest after we discovered a filing cabinet nearly full of articles from the late Rev. Johan Tangelder

which were donated to PRC some time ago but again without anyone having accessed them for a long time. (Note: if someone is interested in this treasure trove of materials please let the committee or a board or a staff member know in order to help us to make a prudent decision regarding the destination for all of these files). And then there is the question of what to do with three complete sets of encyclopedias that are collecting more dust than finger prints. Here again, if someone would like to have a set of these fine resources please let someone associated with the school know. And so it goes. We live in a day where the wisdom of the Preacher is as important as ever. “My son, store up My commands within you...then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.” (excerpts from Proverbs 2:1-5)



The Physics class built a marimba together



Working on some impressive-looking calculations

# 2019 GRADUATES



*Kaitlyn Anjema*

This summer Kate has plans to travel to Alberta with friends Rachel, Amanda and Brooklyn. The Lord willing, she hopes to spend the rest of the summer in Equador D.V. where she will be assisting in a medical clinic and starting a music program at a mission school. In the Fall she plans to attend Conestoga College in Waterloo where she is enrolled in the nursing program. Her future ambitions include resigning from her job at McDonalds, traveling the world and moving in with her bestie Amanda. One day she hopes to settle down and get married.



*Amanda Baker*

After graduating from high school Amanda will be traveling to Alberta with Rachel, Brooklyn and Kate. She plans to attend Wilfred Laurier University to obtain an Honours Arts Degree majoring in History with either a business or programming option during her second year, and then studying in a different country for her third year. After university she would like to specialize in Library Science and work with museum archives. During this time she hopes to be active in the mission field, either abroad or in Canada. After university she would like to specialize in Library Science and work with museum archives. During this time she hopes to be active in the mission field, either abroad or in Canada.



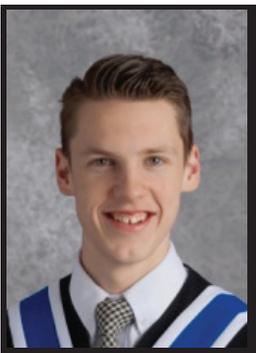
*Rachel Bell*

Rachel will be traveling with Rachel, Brooklyn and Kate to Alberta D.V. In the fall she plans to move in with a friend in Chatham while attending St. Clair College in the Practical Nursing Program. She'd like to one day get married and have lots of children.



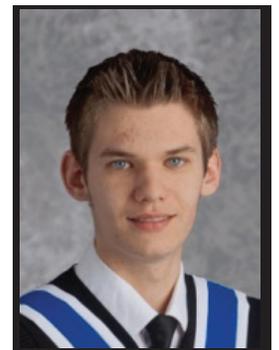
*Brooklyn Bergsma*

Brooklyn will be attending Brescia University College, affiliated with the University of Western Ontario, working towards a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science or History in hopes of one day working in politics or as a high school teacher. She is looking forward to her cross-Canada adventure with Amanda, Kate, and Rachel.



*Brett Blokker*

Brett will be attending Fanshawe College where he is enrolled in a business program. This summer he will be working as a line cook at Dawghouse Pub and Eatery in London.



*Todd Bos*

Todd has completed co-op placement with Paramount Plumbing and Heating and plans to continue working there for awhile.

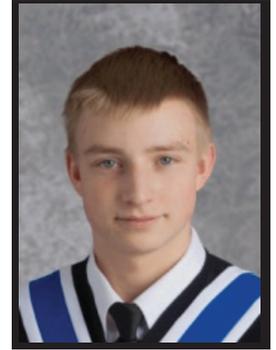
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# 2019 GRADUATES



*Victoria Boyd*

Victoria is enrolled at Fanshawe College in Woodstock in a one-year program to be trained as a hair stylist. She'd like one day to travel to Hawaii, possibly get married someday and have a family.



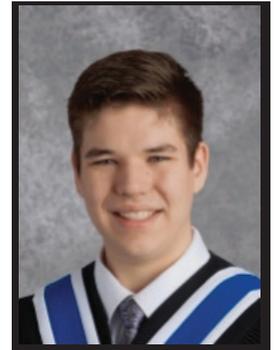
*Alex DeVries*

Alex will be enrolled in an apprenticeship program while working at New Electric in London, with the goal of becoming a certified Industrial Electrician. His future dreams include getting married and having a family, participating in competitive drifting and attending the Auto Salon Tour of Japan.



*Warren Harke*

Warren has been offered a position and will be working for Thomadale Farm, a dairy farm in Strathroy.



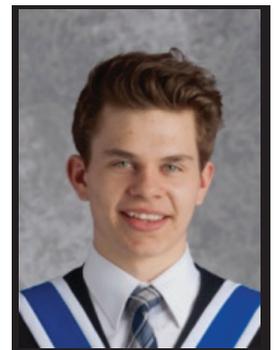
*Elijah Hiemstra*

Next year Elijah is planning to attend Gillespie Academy in Woodstock for a one-year Bible program. After that he hopes to study and/or work in the mechanics field. Eventually he'd like to get married and have a family.



*Jenna Hiemstra*

Jenna plans to study French and Biology/Chemistry at Brescia University College in London. After completing her degree, she plans to get her Bachelor of Education degree and then teach Grades 6-12. Her future dreams include going back to the Dominican Republic on another mission trip.



*Collin Kikkert*

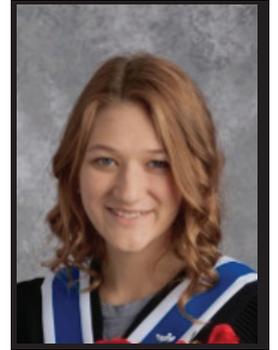
Collin plans to enroll in an apprenticeship program for a General Carpenter, with the hopes of eventually taking over his father's business. His aspirations include going scuba diving as well as sky diving. He would love to one day get married and have children, the Lord willing.

# 2019 GRADUATES



*Carsten Koopman*

Carsten plans to attend Western University for the Social Sciences program with the hopes of becoming a Forensic Science Technician. He'd like to one day travel in Europe and elsewhere, perhaps even to Space. His future dreams include getting married, having children and watching (maybe playing if deemed good enough) in the World Cup when it comes to Canada.



*Kristin Korten*

Kristin is hoping to volunteer abroad for several months before attending post-secondary education, preferably from University of British Columbia, where she plans to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree. Following that, she hopes to go on to law school. This summer she'll be working with her parents building a house and continuing to train horses.



*Deanne Korvemaker*

Deanne is enrolled at Redeemer University College where she plans to major in French and minor in English and Psychology, with the goal of becoming a teacher. She hopes to study one year in France during her undergrad and tour Europe. She would also like to take counselling courses with CCEF with the prospect of becoming a Christian Counselor in the future (after teaching for a few years). She hopes to go on another mission trip or even teach in a developing country.



*Colten MacDermid*

In September Colten is planning to attend Capernwray Bible College in England, spending the year learning about God through Biblical teaching and practical training. After that he hopes to enroll in a college architectural program with the goal of becoming employed as an architect. One day he'd like to own his own successful architectural design business.

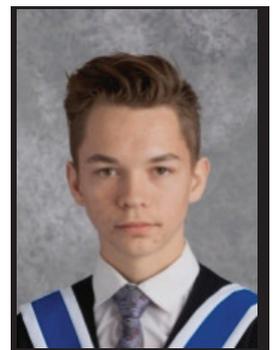


*Natasha Meinen*

Natasha will be working at Foodland. One day she hopes to travel a bit, get married and have children.

*Aiden Moesker*

Aiden will be enrolled in the Agriculture Equipment Technician apprenticeship at Fanshawe College. His future aspirations include starting a dairy farm as soon as possible, getting married, having children.



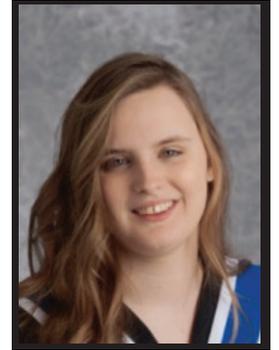
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# 2019 GRADUATES



*Allison Pieterman*

Allison will be attending Brescia University College where she plans to study creative writing, history and psychology. Following that she would like to get a Bachelor of Education degree from Redeemer University with the plan to teach grade 6-10.



*Amanda Pieterman*

Amanda will be attending Mohawk College in Hamilton, where she will be studying Graphic Design. Her future dream would be to operate her own Graphic Design business and own a home where she can look after an abundance of puppies.



*Nigel Skinner*

Nigel is planning to work for a year and then hopes to get an apprenticeship in a trade.



*Christy Slaa*

Christy is hoping to find employment as a Graphic Designer after completing the Graphic Design program at Fanshawe College. This past March she joined the HANDS Team mission trip to the Dominican Republic, and she would like to participate in more mission trips. Her future dreams include getting married and having a family.



*Kierra Vander Heide*

Kierra is enrolled in the collaborative Mohawk-McMaster Bachelor of Nursing program, specializing in neonatal services. She'd like to one day be part of more mission trips in various third-world countries. Her future dreams include settling down somewhere in the country, getting married and raising a family.



*Kevin Van Dyk*

Kevin is planning to enroll into the plumbing apprenticeship program at Fanshawe College, while working at Pro Electric. He hopes to go to the Dominican Republic on a mission trip, and one day get married.

# 2019 GRADUATES



*Jordan VanDyken*

Jordan plans to attend Redeemer University for Business Management. He hopes to one day get married, have many children, and live a middle-class life to the end of his days.



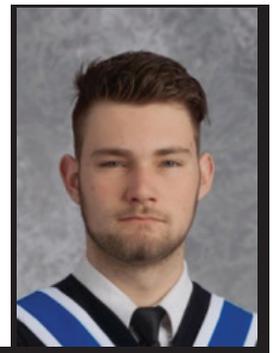
*Simon Vellenga*

Simon plans to work for a year in the masonry trade, and maybe someday start his own business. In the future he would like to go on more mission trips, get married and have children.



*Karla Vermeulen*

Karla will be attending Fanshawe College in London where she is enrolled in the Development Service Worker program. She's hoping to work in an elementary school once she has completed her program. Her future dreams include doing some traveling, getting married, and having children.



*Dedrick Wubs*

Dedrick will be continuing his co-op placement with Carquest, building motors for Carquest, with the plans to become a licensed engine machinist or mechanic and maybe starting his own business someday. On weekends he will be working on a farm, running equipment.

## BOYS' SOCCER NEWS

On May 10, 2019 the boys' soccer team left for the annual OCSSAA soccer tournament. We were feeling confident going into the tournament after our two exhibition games earlier in the season. We tied our first exhibition game against London 2-2, and won our second one against Rehoboth 5-1. We played four games at the tournament and went undefeated. This is all due to the outstanding performance of our goalkeepers, a strong defensive line, and some stunning strikes. We won against Quinte in our first game 3-1. For our evening game we played Brampton and delivered a blowout win of 9-1. We went back to the hotel and got ready for our games the next day. We

played London again in the morning. This was our toughest game which we narrowly won 1-0. This is largely in thanks to the defense and goalies. This put us on to the 'B' Flight Championships against Woodland. There were some nerves going into the finals after our close game against London. The game was intense. Our defense went to work, and our forwards and midfielders were passing well. This led to many goals and we pulled out another win 5-2. Overall, we all played well and had a good time. It was a good season from everyone. Thanks to Devyn Zekveld, Mrs. Kay, and Mr. Pieterman for helping coach.

*Carsten Koopman*

"TRAIN YOURSELF FOR GODLINESS . . ." 1 TIMOTHY 4:7B

# BRIDGE DAYS AT PROVIDENCE

It sometimes seems like there is a chasm between classroom learning and real life. We occasionally get questions like, “Why do we need to know this?” or “When are we ever going to use this in real life?” This coming fall, we will work at bridging that chasm by starting “Bridge Days” at Providence. They will also be a great way to engage our students in real work – work that serves real people with a real need.



*“It is nothing but a pious wish and a grossly unwarranted hope that students trained to be passive and non-creative in school will suddenly, upon graduation, actively contribute to the formation of Christian culture.”*

On a typical day at Providence, students have four 80-minute periods where they study four different courses. On a Bridge Day, students will spend the entire school day in one course. We plan on four Bridge Days each semester – one for each course. The Bridge Day might take the form of “field work,” where student learning and activities will take place off site, or the Bridge Day might stay on-site, but then we will be looking for ways to bring experts or community members into the school so that we’re still bridging student learning to the real world.

Examples of Bridge Day work could include:

- Interviewing seniors in our community about the meaning of various psalms in their life for Bible 10
- Working with the Thames Valley Conservation Authority to carry out a project that will help protect and preserve the Thames River for Science 9
- Visiting local university campuses to interview university students about their viewpoints on some of the big questions we discuss in Philosophy 12
- Putting up an art display of student work in a local art gallery for Art 9
- Meeting with the few remaining students from the Mt. Elgin Industrial Institute (a residential school) to hear and pass on their story for Canadian History 10
- Planning, budgeting, and completing a building project for a community organization in Math 11C

It is important that our students engage in this kind of real work. One Christian academic once said, “It is nothing but a pious wish and a grossly unwarranted hope that students trained to be passive and non-creative in school will suddenly, upon graduation, actively contribute to the formation of Christian culture.” If we want our students to be active and creative builders when they graduate, we need to be intentional about practising that during school.

Our students are well-situated within a community of school supporters and the wider community of Middlesex Centre. There are lots of opportunities to reach out to people working in the field, experts in a specific area of study, or community members who would benefit from our service. Bridge Days will be about using these connections to provide our students with an opportunity to do real work for real people with real needs. Bridge Days will be an opportunity for our students to practise being active and creative, to practise actively contributing to building Christian culture. And we expect that this will move us forward in our mission of preparing our students for a life of service in God’s Kingdom as ambassadors for Christ.

*Mike Vander Deen*

# BOARD UPDATE

As you read this, PRC has finished another school year. The textbooks have closed, tests and exams have been written, teachers have finished marking and filling out report cards. As we look back over the past year, we see these things and many other things as well. However, if we only take note of the physical realities, we are missing the most important reality of all! This would be seeing God's hand working through the past year and not only in the past, but also in the present, and we trust in the future as well. To see that we need "eyes of faith"; and that is the most important part of the education that we seek to provide at Providence Reformed Collegiate! As a Board we trust that the teachers have been providing an education that seeks to show that our faithful Father works in all things to show His power and also His grace towards us. We trust that the students have gained a greater appreciation of God's boundless love to His people and also the obligation that we have as His

people to reflect that love to those around us; to the end that His Name may receive the praise and glory! The Board has been able to hire some new staff to replace staff retiring this year and in past years; this has alleviated the "critical shortage" of staff that we thought might happen. Although we still could use another teacher, a course offering has been put together that will serve the students at PRC well. The Board is continuing to work through the comments offered at the "Vision Meeting" held this past January. We hope to formulate a Strategic Plan that will help the Board focus on goals and ways to achieve those goals. In closing, the Board wishes to express appreciation to the staff, students, parents, and broader supporting community for the support and encouragement that we have received this past year. Above all we praise and thank our faithful covenant-keeping God and Father for guiding and preserving PRC this past year.

*Frank Werkema*



*Biology Grade 12 Students*



*Fun with dissecting cow eyeballs*

**"TRAIN YOURSELF FOR GODLINESS . . ." 1 TIMOTHY 4:7B**

# ALUMNI REPORT

*Tim Kooistra ('06)*

Looking back, it's amazing to witness the continual growth and development of PRC, especially with the new expansion now complete. It has been 13 years since I've graduated and I'm amazed that students born in the year of my graduation (2006) are now poised to enter high school in the next year or two. Where has the time gone? Certainly those four years were a great chapter in my life, developing much character and friendships. From starting at the old church site in the portables to suddenly moving through high school and finding myself standing at the front of East CRC with my graduation cap on with my diploma. I am thankful for the wonderful education that PRC provided me as it supplied a great foundation for my life. Following my chapter at PRC, I went to Mohawk College and enrolled in the Transportation Engineering Technology program. Soon after, in 2009, I found myself out on the West Coast working for the City of Surrey (just outside of Vancouver) as a co-op. Through that door opening I was able to meet Cheri and we were married in 2012. We have two girls and a third child on the way, Brandi (2014), Leah (2016) and "Junior", due July 2019. A second co-op term plus graduation from Mohawk placed me back in Surrey again. This time with a full time position with the City. The Lord certainly is good. However, the longing for being back home (Ontario) never left, and in 2016, another door opened where I was able to transition over to the City of London. Fast-forward two years and a new opportunity to join the private sector awaited, and since November 2018 I have been working for Dillon Consulting Limited in downtown London as a Transportation & Traffic Technologist which allowed me to stay local in a great new job and career. Certainly this part of my life has been great, full of challenges and new opportunities. In September, Brandi will begin Kindergarten at Covenant beginning a new generation into the education chapter for the Kooistra family. We are thankful to the Lord for the many blessings he has provided us. We currently live in Mount Brydges and are members at Providence United Reformed Church in Strathroy.



*Tim and Cheri Kooistra and family*



*Our professional staff go on a Safari*



*Soccer players*

## SCHOOL CLEAN-UP DAY

Our annual school clean-up day will be held on Wednesday July 3rd. Each family sending children to PRC is required to put in a few hours of volunteer time to help give the school a good cleaning. There will be an afternoon session (1-4pm) and an evening session (6-9pm). Please bring your own pails and cloths. Cleaning supplies will be provided This is also a great time for students to earn some volunteer hours. Please put it on your calendar so that we can have a great turnout and get everything completed. Many hands make light work!

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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