



Immaculate Conception

V A N C O U V E R

Today, I will grow in knowledge, love of God and service to others.

Annual Report

2016/2017



Note from the Pastor

The Lord give you Peace!

It is good that we at Immaculate Conception School gather together for an 'AGM'. It is vital within the Catholic ethos to gather the community together. As a Catholic school, we are not first and foremost in the business of buying or selling an education. At our school we place our children and their needs at the centre of our community. Our gathering and conversation today is a 'blessed' and 'holy' encounter. We are not a corporation so much as a family! And like any family, it is always good (however challenging) to gather and truly communicate what is in our heart, souls and minds.

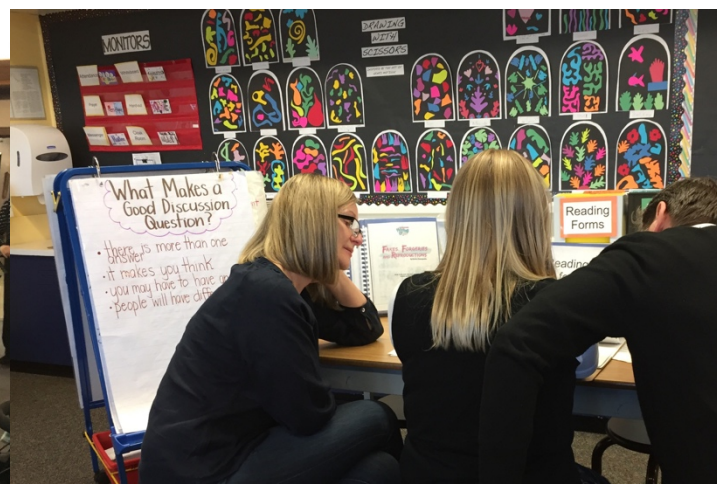
The work that we all do at Immaculate Conception School is for our children. It is a work that gives a dignity to each and every one of us, be we parent, staff, teacher, principal or pastor. Each of us is called by one another to be faithful and to be devoted to do what belongs to each of us to do, be we a mom, dad, principal, teacher, PEC member, or pastor. We need to be able to count on each other. Hopefully, we love what we do, act justly in our dealings with one another and strive to be in touch with our mutual responsibilities toward each other. (May we never forget that every child is also learning something beautiful and practical when they witness such communication, solidarity and exchanges among us.)

As a Catholic school, we are more than a coalition of professionals, committees and families with a vested interest. We voluntarily promise to be bonded together as brothers and sisters—to hold our resources in common—to share a common task. May our Catholic Vision of education at Immaculate Conception always shape and fashion our conversations and relationships with one another—including at our 'AGM'!

Finally, may I add that I truly believe that our 'Catholic Vision' is alive within the minds, hearts and souls of the children here at Immaculate. When I see them in class, gym, the playground—just hanging out together—immediately sense that they feel and know that they belong, that they are brothers and sisters, that they can count on one another, that they are mutually responsible to each other and that Immaculate is leading each of them into a future that is filled with hope and promise.

Peace and all Good!

Fr. Paul ofm



Note from the Principal

This year, our Catholic schools' theme echoes Pope Francis' call to "Care for Our Common Home", and the students of Immaculate Conception School have been doing just that as they grow in knowledge, love of God and service to others. With the implementation of the redesigned B.C. curriculum, teachers and students have been looking at learning in new and exciting ways. Students have also participated in a wide variety of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities in the areas of athletics, academics and the arts.

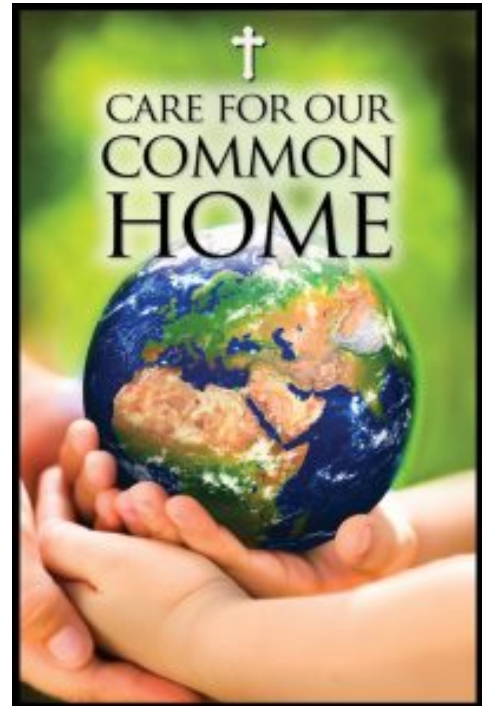
Nurturing students' faith development permeates everything we do. Whether it is attending mass, preparing to receive the sacraments, or participating in events such as the Living Rosary, the Advent Paralyurgy, or the Holy Thursday retreat, everyone at ICS recognizes that this dimension makes us truly special.

Our students continue to serve others in many ways, both within the school and in the wider community. Relationships are developed through buddy activities, peer helping, and interaction with the seniors of the parish. A variety of outreach projects throughout the year remind us how fortunate we are and that we have an obligation to help those in need.

On behalf of the students and staff, I would like to thank the parent and parish communities for their continued support of our Little Blue School. We are all blessed to be part of this wonderful community.

Yours sincerely,

Colette Foran
Principal



Short note from the PEC Chair

Our PEC says farewell at the end of this year to Gina Bestbier, who has been a fantastic, long-serving PEC Member. We are fortunate to have had her talents and hard work on the PEC for the past eight years, most recently in the role of Chairperson. I am grateful to have her as a mentor and a guide, as I take on the role of PEC Chairperson. Thank you for sharing your time and talents!

This Annual Report is a summary of a few key areas of our 2016/2017 work. It is our hope that it will provide you with an overall picture of how the school is governed as we strive to meet our vision of a thriving faith community that welcomes every child as a gift from God; growing in knowledge, love of God and service to others.

We (the PEC) do what we do for our children - and we could not do it without the support of the entire Parish and School community. We are very grateful for our Pastor, Father Paul, our Principal, Miss Foran, our dedicated teachers and staff; and our committed parents and guardians.

With much gratitude,
Christine Lee
Parish Education Committee, Chair

2016/17 PEC Members

Elected and appointed PEC members for the 2016/2017 school year are:

Christine Lee, Chair

Gina Bestbier, Vice-Chair

Laura Soeller, Treasurer

Laura Williams, CISVA Delegate & Strategy

Calvin Leong, Secretary

Bosco Li, Grounds & Maintenance

Grace Wright, Member at Large

School Evaluation

Catholic schools are evaluated periodically by both the CISVA and the BC Ministry of Education. This April, ICS underwent its evaluation—the first in six years. The evaluation process requires a significant amount of preparatory work by the Principal, Teachers and support staff. While the complete report is not yet available, we do know that our efforts were very well received! The teachers' plans incorporating the re-designed curriculum brought particular praise, and are now being looked to as examples within the CISVA. Congratulations to our Principal and Teachers on a job well done!

Introduction to the Parish Education Committee

Together with our Pastor Father Paul Smith and Principal Miss Colette Foran, the Parish Education Committee (PEC) is responsible for the running of the school.

- The Pastor is responsible for faith development and is the Archbishop's Representative.
- The Principal is responsible for the administration and educational component of the school community.
- The PEC is responsible for the business operations of the school and for ensuring that the educational policy of the CISVA is followed in the school; it prepares the budget for the operation and maintenance of the school, ensures the school maintains accurate records, oversees the day-to-day operations of the school (including grounds and infrastructure maintenance) and hires teachers and staff with the approval of the Pastor, and more. (ref: CISVA Policy No. 110)

The PEC does not work in isolation. ICS is one of 46 parochial schools within the Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese (CISVA). The CISVA governs both elementary and high schools within the Catholic schools in Vancouver. The PEC makes decisions and sets policy to govern the school, providing these decisions fall within the CISVA Board's policies and regulations.

The PEC is composed of active members of Immaculate Conception Parish (not necessarily parents of students) and the Pastor. Members serve two year terms (up to a maximum of four terms).

The PEC meets once a month with Father Paul, Miss Foran and a representative from the teaching staff. A different teacher representative was selected to attend each meeting this year. Meeting minutes are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway and are kept in a binder in the school office. Parents are always welcome to join the meeting as observers. If parents wish to present an issue of concern to the PEC, they may do so with seven-day written notice to the Chair.

This report provides a summary of a few key areas of the PEC's work this past year, namely:

- Parent participation
- Statement of operations
- Fundraising and donations
- Ongoing grounds and maintenance
- Strategic Plan update

Parent Participation—spirit of community

Parent participation is a cornerstone of our strong, vibrant community and one of the main reasons that our school has so many programs, given its size. Active participation provides positive role modelling for our students, teaching them the value of helping others, as in our motto "service to others". Most importantly, parent participation makes enrollment at Immaculate Conception a family affair.

The Parent Participation Program is an integral part in the operation of our school. The aim of the program is to create a spirit of community among families and staff as we work together to provide the best education for our students.

There are countless opportunities for families to participate in our school community. Examples of these opportunities include ongoing activities such as playground supervision, being a garden buddy or a class parent, baking, fluffing bark mulch, etc. or one off events such as helping at the Christmas Fair, Walkathon, Sports Day, Family Social Night - and much, much more...

This year we continued to streamline the Parent Participation Program to make it run more smoothly and increase parent participation opportunities. We aim to match families' talents with the school's needs and we will continue to solicit input from families to make this program even stronger. We are continuing to use Signup.com (formerly Volunteer Spot) for signing up for participation opportunities and for logging completed hours.

The parent participation requirement is 40 hours per family per year, yet most families go above and beyond! This highlights one of our key strengths as a community, and we can't thank you enough. Because our parent participation program is so critical to ICS, we have committed to reviewing the program as part of our strategic planning process. We want to ensure that we create sustainable opportunities for parent involvement for all school families.

THANK YOU!

Extra-curricular programs

Basketball
Badminton
Chess Club
Choir
Cross-country Running
Math Challenge Club
Track and Field
Volleyball

Co-curricular / Enrichment

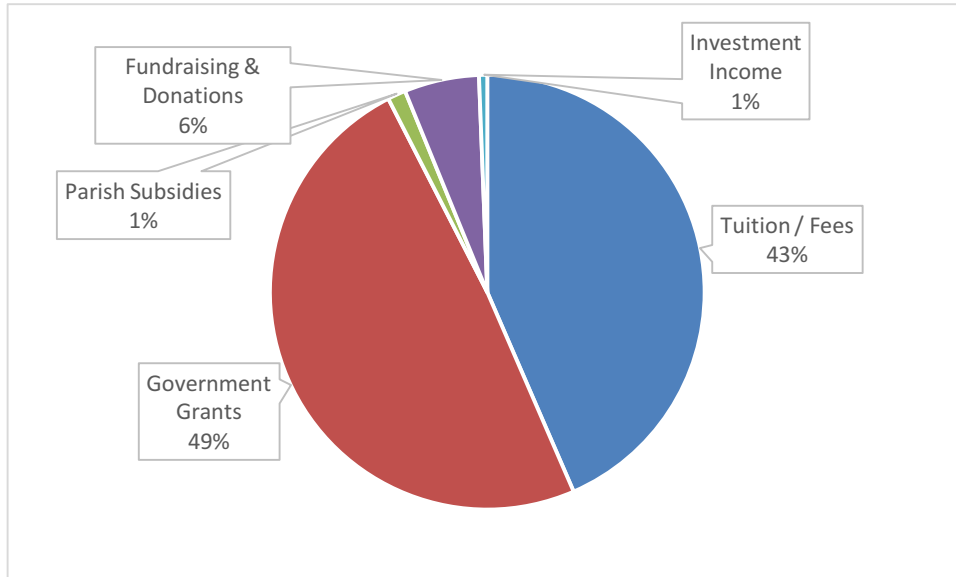
Carnival d'hiver
Cross-country Skiing
Music (including guitar program)
Musical "The Wizard of Oz"
School & Community Garden
Speech Arts
Spirit Day
Sports Day*
Vancouver Opera

*This program was funded by a Community Gaming Grant which is administered by the Parent Support Group.

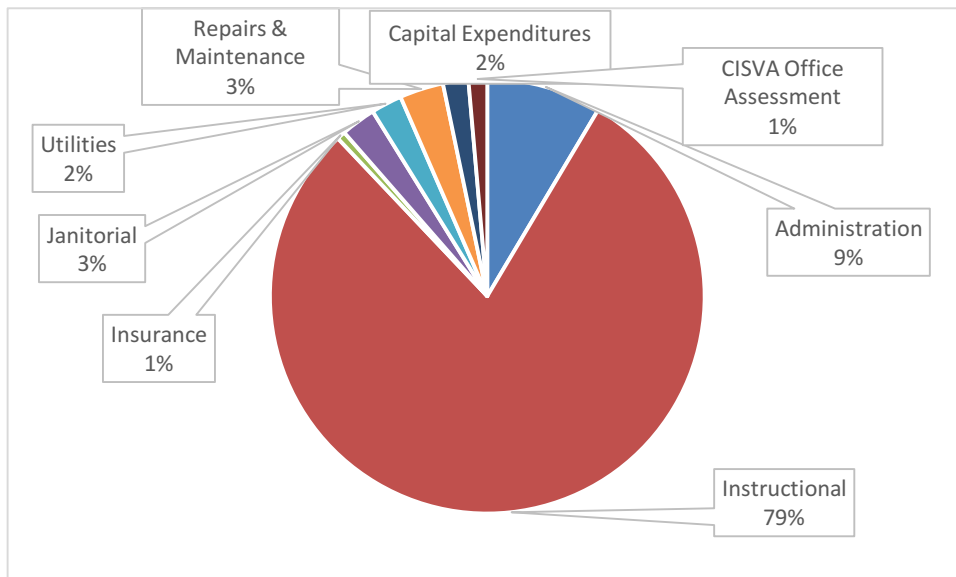
2015-2016 Statement of Operations

As a CISVA school, we budget to break even each year. If we are fortunate to have an excess in a given year, we have the choice of spending it, or reserving it for a future project. The charts below are based on audited 2015/2016 financials for the year end June 30, 2016 (not the 2016/2017 school year, as this report was published in April 2017).

Revenues \$1,706,570



Expenses \$1,643,646



Outreach Projects at ICS

Giving (of time, talents and treasure) is a year round endeavour at ICS - not just at Christmas. Throughout the year each grade works towards raising funds or goods for various charities, locally and globally.

The following have been (or will be) supported by students and their families in 2016/2017:

Agape Street Ministry

Books for Me

Chalice

BC Children's Hospital

Covenant House

Terry Fox Foundation

The Door Is Open

Syrian & Iraqi Refugee Families

St. Vincent de Paul

Grounds & Maintenance

Grounds and Maintenance is an essential role of the PEC - to ensure that the school facilities and grounds are safe and functional.

In addition to the routine maintenance (janitorial services, painting, pest control, gutter cleaning, etc.) many necessary upgrades and renovations were done throughout the school in the past year, such as: major improvements to the gym by cladding the gym walls, installing a stage surround, and creating under-stage storage; new floors in the K and Gr. 1 classrooms, painting of several classrooms (set up of a regular painting schedule), new fence on the east side of the school to align with the property line, installation of new mulch for the play structure.

Fundraising and Donations—reflection of a generous community

The ICS community raises funds to supplement the excellent academic, sport and cultural programs we provide for our students and to cover many of the operating costs of our school. Our two biggest annual fundraisers are the Christmas Fair and the Walkathon. Not only do these events raise much needed funds for our school but they help us build a strong and vibrant school community. We also raise funds for our many outreach projects.

The popular Christmas Fair, held on the Saturday before the first Sunday of Advent, is not just a school event, it has become a Dunbar community event. This year it attracted about 500 people, served over 400 breakfasts and we raised an incredible \$67,623!

With wonderful weather, our September Walkathon was a great success both at building community in the early part of the school year, and in raising an amazing \$28,628! Each year, regardless of how much we raise at the Walkathon we donate \$3,000 to two school-related projects – an elementary school in Vietnam, which we have supported for over a decade, and a Catholic charity in Haiti. This year, we donated \$1,500 to the Sisters of Saint Ann for their Haitian schools. We have a special connection with the Sisters of Saint Ann, as this was the teaching order that first started our school. Given the terrible destruction and dire need after Hurricane Matthew, we also donated an additional \$1,500 to Haiti in the care of the Salesian Missions.

While most of our fundraising money is allocated to covering our operating costs, over the last few years it has allowed us to take on larger projects. This year we repaired and clad the gym walls, as well as created an attractive stage surround and much needed under-stage storage. The Parish has also embarked on a fundraising campaign for the seismic upgrade of our school building. Given that the timeframe and potential impacts of this project are not yet known, we deferred planned spending on school playground enhancements until such time as the school is able to obtain more information about any potential impacts that the proposed seismic upgrades could have.

It is worth noting that occasionally the school also gratefully receives gifts and donations from sponsors, alumni and families. In the last few years, these donations have contributed towards the purchase of computers, building the school garden, setting up a guitar program, providing additional enrichment opportunities for the students and upgrading the general facilities. The school is very grateful for the generous support from the school and parish community through the giving of time, talents and financial resources.

Strategic Plan—building a thriving community

The PEC established a strategic planning process for Immaculate Conception School in 2014/15. Each year, we review the plan to ensure that it properly reflects our needs and goals.

Guiding Principles

In 2016/17 we added the following framework to the plan. It helps us to ensure that PEC decisions are consistent with our vision/mission. When making decisions and evaluation possible actions, we must satisfy ourselves that we are applying the following criteria.

- We are Faith Centered with a deep commitment to active expression of lived faith.
- We are Student Centered. Once a child becomes a student at ICS, we are committed to doing all we can to support him/her. We ask if any policy or operational action or decision is in the best interest of the students. How does this support students? Are we considering the unique needs of different students to ensure we provide an inclusive environment for those with special needs, behavioural needs, enrichment or other needs? We recognize that the PEC does not review or assess curriculum or teaching methodology decisions, as that oversight belongs to the Principal.
- We wish to promote Excellence and Continual Learning. Our goal is to support an environment in which academic excellence can occur while helping to engender empathetic students that can cope in our world.
- We are Family and Community centered. We are committed to benefitting the families and communities to which we belong.
- We are committed to the Active pursuit of Social and Ecological Justice. On all proposed policy/operational actions or decisions, we ask: Does this help us "care for our common home" per Laudato Si? How does this impact the wider community in which we live? How does this encourage opportunity to do Good in the world beyond awareness? Is this a compassionate decision considering all the circumstances of the situation? Is there a role to advocate for the individuals involved to ensure social justice occurs?
- We are committed to Transparent Governance. How does a particular action or decision fit into our broad vision/mission? Has the area of interest or concern been validated with research and facts? Will a particular action or decision help us ensure the long term viability of the school? Have we transparently communicated what has been done and why?

Supporting Projects

We selected to focus on three key strategic imperatives identified in the plan. We are now working to develop short, medium and long term supporting projects in each of the following areas:

Catholicity: Increase level of understanding, commitment and practice (of parents and guardians) of an integrated faith. Support parents in busy world to develop deeper understanding of faith so that we increase prayer and active practice of faith at home. Through lived faith help our children learn empathy.

Parent Participation: Optimize utilization of parent participants' gifts and talents to ensure we have the resources (both time and money) to fill all necessary roles. Evaluate current and projected future parent demographics, review and recommend a revamped parent participation program to ensure that it builds community and sustainable involvement for all ICS families in a realistic way.

Marketing: Increase awareness of ICS internally to current families to improve retention. Improve our visibility externally in the city to ensure sustained enrolment. We have an opportunity to announce our good works and eliminate the often heard "I didn't know about ICS..."

Farewell, Au Revoir ...

We would like to wish our 2017 graduating students the very best for their future and pray that they will carry our school's motto in their hearts always: "**Today I will grow in knowledge, love of God and service to others.**"

Our graduating students will be attending numerous schools around the city in 2017/2018, namely: St. Patrick's Secondary, Little Flower Academy, Vancouver College, Crofton House, St. George's, Prince of Wales Secondary, Point Grey Mini, Eric Hamber Mini, Kitsilano Secondary, and Byng Arts Mini.

We also want to thank all the families that are "graduating". We will miss you! Your contributions over the years have been invaluable and we are truly grateful...





Immaculate Conception

V A N C O U V E R

Today, I will grow in knowledge, love of God and service to others.

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