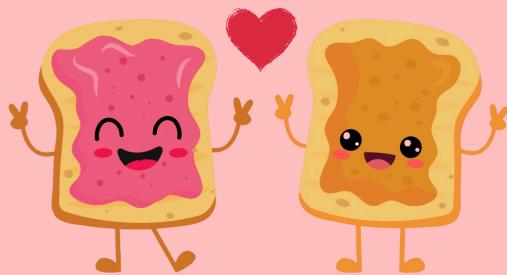




Houston  
Christian  
School



## PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY FOOD DRIVE

Our PB and J food drive is getting underway, and we're excited to invite our community to join in. This Valentine's season, we want to show care for our neighbours by supporting our local food bank with donations of peanut butter and jelly. From Monday through February 12, we're challenging our community to turn one table into a colourful spread of jars, stacking them higher as the days go on. Bring any size jar of peanut butter or jelly and help us build a table full of love.



# Branches

*a school to home newsletter*

February 6, 2025

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HCS?

### February 10 - Tuesday

- Grade 7/8 Skating at the Arena @ 12:45

### February 11 - Wednesday

- EATS Modules for Grades 7-10 from 12:30 - 3:00 pm

### February 12 - Thursday

- Elementary Student Led Conferences and Middle School Parent/Teacher Conferences.
- Grade 11/12 Skating at the Arena
- Last Day of the PB&J Food Drive

### February 13 - Friday

- Professional Development Day
  - No School

### February 16 - Monday

- Family Day - No School

## FEBRUARY MEMORY VERSE

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

*Psalm 139: 13-14*

# ELEMENTARY STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES AND MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

We look forward to connecting with you during the Elementary Student-Led Conferences and the Middle School Parent-Teacher Conferences on Thursday, February 12.

Elementary Student-Led Conferences will take place in a drop-in format from 2:00 to 4:00 pm, with teachers available to meet with parents in their classrooms. Childcare will be available in the gymnasium from 2:05 to 3:00 pm. We ask that parents escort their children to and from the gym.

Middle school parents will receive a sign-up link through the HCS app to book a Parent-Teacher Conference, or they may access the Conference Sign-up link below.



This is a great opportunity to connect with your child's learning, see firsthand what they have been working on this year, and talk together about ways you can support and extend their learning at home.



This February, Houston Christian School will be taking part in Jump Rope for Heart, a school-wide fundraiser supporting the fight against heart disease and stroke. Our official Jump Rope for Heart Day will take place in February 2026.

To add some fun motivation, we are offering the following incentives:

- The elementary class that raises the most will earn a pancake party.
- The middle/high school class that raises the most will earn a taco party.
- If our school reaches \$2,000, the entire school will celebrate with a pizza and movie party in the gymnasium.

Families can support the fundraiser by registering their student to raise funds or by making a direct donation. Please follow this [link](#) to donate or register and to find more information about the event and rewards.

Thank you for supporting our students as we jump, give, and work together to support heart health.

# PRINCIPAL'S PULSE (WORDS FROM OUR HEAD)

This week, I had the opportunity to watch our senior boys' basketball team play against Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School in our gym. It was fun to see the crowd and watch the team compete. It was even better because we won!

I have had these last few months to reflect on the role of sports in our school culture. It is clearly important to many of our students and families. Sports bring people together, and it is fun to watch our kids use the gifts and talents God has given them. When a team plays well together, it is a beautiful thing to see; when it doesn't quite come together, it can be harder to watch. Last night was fun—not perfect, but fun.

The thoughts below are my reflections, offered as questions for our community to consider together.

I find myself thinking about the balance between classroom learning and the travel that often takes students away from class for sports and tournaments. I recognize that this is part of life in the North. However, I wonder about the messages that we are sending out to both students and families. How do we communicate the importance of school within this reality?

I also find myself thinking about the importance of winning in our culture. The phrase “winning is everything” comes to mind. Is this the dominant theme our athletes live by? Should it be? As a community, it is worth contemplating what we emphasize and how those messages shape our decisions. As we consider this, we are led to broader questions about how far that mindset extends. How do we make decisions about team participation, including whether we cut players who are not good enough in order to field a “winning” team? How might those decisions change as our school continues to grow? Fortunately, our school has not yet been in a position where much of this has occurred, but for how much longer, as larger classes move up through the school and become eligible to play on sports teams?

As we think about our athletics program, it is worth asking how we view and treat our coaches. They are volunteers who give generously of their time and do their best for our students. As a community, we should be intentional about how we support these volunteers. We need to be thoughtful about whether and how we step in when we have concerns about a coach’s decision, such as our child’s playing time. When concerns arise and parents feel they warrant further conversation, they are encouraged to reach out to the Athletics team. This helps support our volunteer coaches and spares them from having to navigate difficult conversations on their own.

As a Christian school, our goal is to help our students grow both in their knowledge of God and in the gifts God has given them. The challenge is finding faithful ways to do both well.

May God grant us that wisdom as we walk this path together.

Blessings,

Ron Donkersloot



# ATHLETICS UPDATE: GAMES, TOURNAMENTS, AND TEAM SPIRIT!



We have arrived at the Zone weekend of our basketball season, and it is sure to be an exciting one!

In this week's Branches, you will find another addition of Coach's Corner. We are incredibly grateful to our coaches, who are integral to our season's success. We pray that our teams, coaches, and parents have a memorable weekend marked by sportsmanship and healthy competition.

Earlier this week, BC School Sports emailed all member schools with an important reminder regarding post-season play (also known as zone tournaments). With the added layer of our Christian perspective, we ask coaches, parents, and spectators to think carefully about how we approach sports—and those who make it possible—for the benefit of our student-athletes.

We have included a condensed version of the BC School Sports (BCSS) Bulletin below that pertains specifically to spectators:

*As we move into the basketball post-season, the intensity around games increases, both on the court and in the stands. We want the environments our student-athletes to play in to be memorable, loud, and intense, but it is important that, above all else, they remain safe. A safe environment does not happen by accident. It takes a thorough plan, clearly defined roles, and active supervision. It is more than just "being present," but actively monitoring and defusing situations before they escalate.*

## Clear Standards for Spectator Conduct

- Before the game and at key moments, ensure expectations are communicated:
- respectful conduct (no threats, intimidation, harassment, discriminatory language)
- no approaching officials
- consequences for removal and potential school/team discipline

*The basketball postseason should be a highlight of the year. It's on all of us to ensure it stays that way by being proactive, prepared, and clear in our expectations.*

*BC School Sports*



Have a great weekend, everyone! We look forward to cheering

For athletic news and updates, visit our HCS Athletics page.

Grade 8 Boys – Hazelton (live stream available)

Junior Boys – Terrace (live stream available)

The Athletics Team



# COACHES CORNER

## WENDALL EWALD

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN COACHING? 38 YEARS

What division do you coach? Junior Boys Basketball

### WHY DO YOU COACH?

I enjoy building relationships with students, having the opportunity to build Christ like athletic and sportsmanship attitude.

### THE BEST PART OF COACHING?

Enjoying the energy /enthusiasm of students who love the sport and watching them develop their athletic skill over the year.



### WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE FOOD?

Turkey dinner with all the fixings

Who is your favourite athlete? Wayne Gretzky

## JON SEINEN

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN COACHING? 2 YEARS

What division do you coach? Grade 8 Boys

### WHY DO YOU COACH?

The players are so keen and energized it's very rewarding to try and help them succeed.

### THE BEST PART OF COACHING?

You get the best seats available to watch the most exciting games in Northern BC. Great way to enjoy the winter weekends.



### WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE FOOD?

Steak and lasagna

Who is your favourite athlete? Jana Seinen

## SHANINE SPLETZER

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN COACHING? FIRST YEAR

What division do you coach? Junior Boys Basketball

### WHY DO YOU COACH?

I loved participating in school sports. The lessons and coaches were valuable. I want to be part of the same thing.

### THE BEST PART OF COACHING?

Seeing growth and development and watching athletes work hard one step at a time and seeing it "click".



### WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE FOOD?

Cheese!

Who is your favourite athlete? My kids

## SAWYER SEINEN

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN COACHING? 1 YEAR

What division do you coach? Grade 8 Boys

### WHY DO YOU COACH?

Because I wanted to help my dad.

### THE BEST PART OF COACHING?

Seeing the improvement in players.



### WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE FOOD?

Chicken Fettuccine

Giannis Antetokounmpo (NBA)

Who is your favourite athlete? Giannis Antetokounmpo (NBA)



# CAREER DAY

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