

New School Receives Approval-in-Principle

On April 4, 2012 the Parish received a letter from Archbishop Miller granting us approval-in-principle to proceed to the next stage of building a new school.

“We can now hire architects to do the detailed design work and begin the process of engaging with the City to obtain the



Vic Vela,
Parish Building Committee Chair

necessary permits,” said Parish Building Committee Chair, Vic Vela.

The building committee is now working with architectural firm, Acton Ostry to begin designing the new school, while liaising with the Archdiocese and the required consultants who will provide technical expertise.

Over the past several years, School Principal, Cathie Oberndorf collected information and ideas from other schools in the Lower Mainland that will help inform the new school design.

“It will become a very intense period as we take all of this technical information, and our own vision, and the realities of building on a limited site to create a school that will take us forward for many generations,” said Vic.

Target: Breaking Ground in 2013

The building committee is targeting completion of its initial design by late summer so that the parish can apply

to the City for a development permit and obtain Archdiocesan approval of the design. A development permit signals City support for the design concept, and confirms that any concerns with the building design such as parking and traffic, for example, have been satisfied.

Once this is complete and the development permit received, the Parish will work with the architects to finalize working/construction drawings for the tendering process for contractors and to obtain all necessary building permits.

The Parish and the Archdiocese will oversee a bidding process and select a contractor for the project. “All going very well, we hope to start construction by late spring in 2013,” said Vic.

Reaching Out to Parishes

Approximately 5 - 10 % of the school’s enrolment comes from surrounding parishes, most of which do not have their own schools. The Campaign is now reaching out to these parishes in an effort to gain their financial support for the new school. “Going forward, there are a handful of parochial schools on the west side of Vancouver and there will continue to be ongoing pressure from Catholic families to educate their children in what will be increasingly limited spaces,” said Cathie. “We are in a very fortunate position with a growing population in our region, and increased demand for Catholic elementary education,” she added.



Talking to Our Neighbours

On June 12, the parish held an informal open house for its neighbours to inform them of the new school plans. Invitations were delivered to households, apartments and businesses within a two-block radius of the school. “This is not required by the City at this stage of the process but it’s the right thing to do, to inform them and answer their questions,” said Faith and Foundation Campaign Chair, Lawrence Pillon. Approximately one dozen neighbours showed up. “We think we have a good relationship with our neighbours so it was encouraging that their initial feedback was positive,” he added.

Project Approval Checklist

- Support of Parish Pastoral Council and Finance Committee
- Approval-in-Principle from Archdiocese
- Development Permit application
- Building Permit application
- Construction bidding process & final contractor selection
- Breaking ground



Pass the Torch Goes Hollywood

If we could hand out Oscar Awards, the annual Pass the Torch (PTT) event would earn more than a handful. This year's event attracted over 300 guests in a room decorated in true Hollywood style.



Eileen Cervi, PTT Co-Chair

“Without the extraordinary support of our parents, there’s not a chance PTT would have been nearly as successful as it was,” said PTT Co-Chair, Eileen Cervi.

Over 95 percent of all school parents donated at least 5 hours of their time towards the event, including supporting the acquisitions team for the silent and live auction, food preparation/serving, decorations, to name a few.

“Every year we make a special effort to invite parishioners who would not be engaged with the school on a regular basis,” said Eileen.

“We were very pleased to see so many seniors, friends of parishioners, many new incoming kindergarten parents, and even recently-baptized new members to our community,” said Clare Thomson, PTT Co-Chair. As in past years, the school alumnae were trained to be table servers.

This year’s PTT raised approximately \$80,000 (after expenses).

Thank You.



Clare Thomson, PTT Co-Chair



A Year to Remember

The generosity of St. Augustine parents and parishioners in 2011 towards the new school campaign was breathtaking, with gifts and pledges totalling more than \$1.5 million.

“Without this huge surge of support, we would not be seriously planning for breaking ground next year,” said Jennifer Ingham, former school parent and long-time leader on our fund-raising team.

It started with the Sisters of St. Ann when they made their \$100,000 gift at last years Pass the Torch. This was followed by a parishioner’s exceptionally large bequest of nearly half-a-million dollars. This gift was the foundation of a matching fund to honour this person’s generosity. A wonderful response ensued as the grade 7 parents pledged an incredible \$100,000. The rest of the school grades stepped up with their gifts as did many parishioners to enable the Campaign to complete the \$480,000 Matching Fund.

Teacher Testimonials



Nancy Vales

Born and raised in Vancouver in a deeply Catholic Portuguese family, Nancy began her teaching career at St. Joseph the Worker Parish and soon joined St. Augustine's where she has been a treasured member of the teaching community for sixteen years. Nancy has worked as an early intermediate teacher, and is the Faith Development Coordinator for our staff, coaches volleyball, and offers her time to many activities with the school. Her two boys also attend our school.

In Nancy's words:

St. Augustine's is my second family. The sense of community expressed here is unparalleled. Without a doubt, the foundation of our community is our Faith. As a staff, we begin each day with prayer. This fuels me for the day ahead. The staff, students, and parents each contribute an essential piece to our school community that becomes an amazing whole. We hold one another in prayer, lean on each other for support, and encourage the best within us to shine.

The gift of teaching within a Catholic school is the blessing of naming all the ways in which Christ touches our lives.

What a wonderful way to help children recognize that our Faith is our foundation in how we live each day. Working in a Catholic environment has also deepened my own Faith journey; in teaching the beautiful children entrusted in my care, each one, in return, has taught me about Christ in the most touching and sincere ways. It is a privilege to be part of the family of St. Augustine's and I am grateful that God has led me here!



Audrey Bourassa

Born and raised within the Anglican tradition in Calgary, Audrey's entire education was within the Catholic tradition from Kindergarten through University. She began her teaching career at St. Augustine's eleven years ago as the PE and French teacher. Keeping her French position, Audrey began working as a Grade 5 job-sharing teacher five years ago. Audrey launched our school into the AIM gestures approach to French language instruction six years ago as one of the first Catholic school teachers to embark on this strategy, and our graduating students demonstrate solid competency in the French language as a direct result of her passion, dedication and perseverance.

In Audrey's words:

I grew up in the Catholic Education system under the mentorship and guidance of caring, compassionate and supportive educators. This experience affected me profoundly, ultimately influencing me to pursue a career in education. The values that were instilled in me continue to serve me well and inform the basis of my teaching philosophy. I am who I am because of the teachers I have had.

What I like most about St. Augustine's is the strong sense of community. My coworkers are energetic, committed, and passionate – each day sees us collaborating and working together to improve our teaching methods. Outside the classroom, the parents and families of the students offer an exceptional level of support and involvement. St. Augustine's has a vibrant educational community, and it is a blessing to be a part of it.

St. Augustine's has provided me with the opportunity to teach my specialty subjects, especially French. I am very excited by the results of learning the AIM approach. It has made French a FUN subject to teach and learn. The children are very enthusiastic and have achieved great success with this wonderful approach. Seeing the level of student excitement that the French class generates is very rewarding for me, and I look forward to the students' continued development in this wonderful language.

A Word from Father Terry McNamara, OMI

Dear friends of St. Augustine Parish and School,

We know that good work such as that of the Faith and Foundation Campaign needs to be rooted in faith, and supported through all its efforts with the prayerful intentions of us all.



This has been a grace-filled year for our Parish, and with the Approval in Principle from the Archdiocese, we are given permission to move forward with our plans to build a new school at St. Augustine's.

Thank you, everyone, for your humble, generous and prayerful trust of this good work!

Father Terry McNamara OMI
Pastor

Grade 7 Impressions

We asked the grade seven students from Ms. O'Hara's class to share their observations of the school they will soon be leaving. Below are some highlights:

"...this school is more than a place of learning facts about our faith, it truly teaches us how to live out a Christ-like life."

Anna Tsigounis

"St. Augustine is a wonderful community and I know that I have become who I am today because of the love and faith that grows here."

Bridget Beggs

"St. Augustine School helped me grow into the kind, gentle and intelligent person I am today."

Leandro Hartmann

"Learning about God made me grow up to be a kind, mature, and empathetic student with great ambitions."

Luna Brioschi Serrano

"The Sisters of St. Ann founded this school in 1911 to teach kids about Christ. With the events happening in the world that are inhumane and wrong, being able to trust in God is an important thing to do."

Antony Soulsbury

"St. Augustine school helps me learn and understand my faith. Here we are called to live our lives as a prayer."

Tristan Morgan

The BIG Picture

Total Donations and Pledges*:	\$4,660,826
Funds Received**:	\$4,142,00
Pledges Outstanding:	\$518,826
Total Donors:	794
Total Gifts:	1794

*Includes interest to April 30, 2012
**Faith and Foundation Funds are held in a separate Parish/Archdiocesan account strictly for the purpose of building a new school at St. Augustine's.



Donation forms are available at the back of the church or contact the **Faith & Foundation** office at 604 736 4455 ext. 231