



# Saltus Grammar School

## “Heads Up”

### Notes from the Headmaster and Senior Management Team

#### Headmaster’s Updates: Consultations, Gosling Centre, Gym and Staff News

##### Development Consultation

This year has afforded an opportunity for a process of critical self analysis on the part of the staff and administration of the School. The Headmaster and Deputy Headmaster have held individual meetings with every member of the School staff and this process has provided much helpful professional commentary as well as offering an opportunity to establish such a process as a precursor to formal appraisal on a cyclical basis.

In addition to the individual conversations, we recently concluded a series of group discussions with the staff and the observations recorded at these meetings will assist the management group in their development of a strategic plan for the next three year cycle. These meetings have afforded us an opportunity to stand back from the busy life of the School and to reflect together upon the future needs and current opportunities facing Saltus. Such conferences enable us to share in the drawing together of a vision for the future. The School's continued strength lies in our developing and renewing a shared sense of purpose. The results of the management development planning discussions will be shared later this year.

##### Gosling Centre

Student opinion indicates that the new Gosling Centre is well received by almost all but there are clearly some

'teething problems' that will need to be resolved. It is only by living in a new house that one comes to understand the adjustments that one must make and this is true of our experience in the use of the Centre.

The elevator continues to be a cause of frustration since it's use has been limited by recurrent technical problems. This matter is being addressed by the Trustee Building Committee and I am confident that it will be resolved soon. Students will be disappointed to learn, however, that the elevator was never intended to move backpacks up and down through the building as was suggested in a recent informal poll! The frustration is felt most acutely by those members of the School whose health limits their movement through the building and by the members of the Help Desk team who have to negotiate so many stairs with boxes of equipment.

##### Gymnasium Improvements

The Building Committee has been securing advice and personnel to address the matter of the Haygarth Gymnasium that is clearly showing its age. We addressed the interior of the changing spaces during the Easter break -- somewhat later than originally anticipated; the interior of the gymnasium is to be painted and the sound baffling in the roof is to be replaced during the summer vacation. The



View of the Francis 'Goose' Gosling Centre from the field

cost of this is considerable but it will significantly improve the quality of the space. I am delighted to advise you that we are assisted in our work by a group of enthusiastic parents who may be planning to upgrade the existing bleachers at the mezzanine level.

##### Staff News

At the start of the Spring Term, we welcomed two new teachers in the Senior Department and an additional member to the Maintenance team: **Victoria Holmes** (Business and Economics), **Jason Sprintall** (Physics) and **Jerome Campbell** (Maintenance). After the break, **Edmond Johnson** joined us as our new Help Desk Technician.

At the Senior and Middle School Debate Tournament in November, prizes were given to two outstanding coaches and one was our own **Christianna Hiles** (Senior English).

S4 teacher **Tanisha Edwards** was presented with an International Excellence Award by the Heritage

International Scholarship Trust Foundation award - an annual award which recognises those who teach pre-school through Primary 4 in Bermuda, the Bahamas and Jamaica for talent, inspiration and dedication. Junior teachers **Michelle Squire** welcomed son Amir Squire in December, and **Tanisha Edwards** welcomed daughter Tanah Starr Edwards in February - many thanks to **Karsten Decker** and **Erika Powell** respectively who substituted during their maternity leave.

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## Welcome to Saltus!



**Victoria Holmes.**  
Senior Business & Economics



**Jason Sprintall,**  
Senior Physics



**Jerome Campbell,**  
Maintenance



**Edmond Johnson,**  
Help Desk

### **Saltus Assoc. PTA Dates:**

- \*Street Fair April 28th
- \*AGM May 8th 7.00 p.m.
- \*Bingo Night May 25th  
(Tuition Raffle draw)
- \*Parent/Student Doubles  
Team Tennis June 15

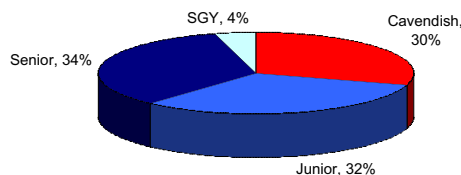
## Parental feedback on PEN is positive

by Miles Allkins

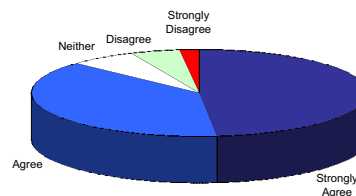
PEN (Parental Electronic Noticeboard) was launched in the spring of 2006 with the aim of improving communications between the School and home by providing a digital means of keeping parents abreast of the activities past, present and future at the School. Feedback from parents has been very positive, highlighting the effectiveness of the system. A survey was carried out in January and February asking parents how they found the system. There were 276 responses, representing the parents of 400 children throughout the School.

When asked to respond to the statement "Overall, I have found the Saltus PEN very useful," 87% of parents responded that they agreed (39%) or strongly agreed (48%), with only 7% of the parent body disagreeing. When asked how frequently they visited the system, 94% of parents responded that they log in at least once a week, with 77% of responses indicating that the parents checked the full contents of the messages more frequently.

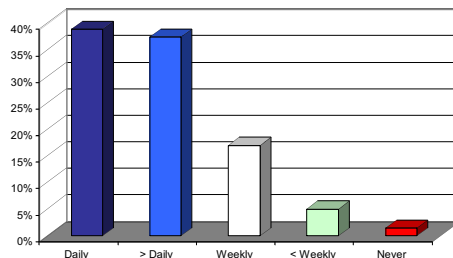
### Proportion of Responses by Department



### Overall, I have found PEN very useful



### How often do you log in to check the full contents of the message sent by the school?



The survey also highlighted areas in which the system could be improved. The following have been identified as areas needing improvement: email frequency, subject and content; navigation within the system; consistency in presentation of information; consistency in use of calendar; correct data at log on; and simplifying user details and log on process. Work continues to improve the system to make sure that it is as user friendly for the parents as possible

If you have any questions regarding PEN, please email [pen@saltus.bm](mailto:pen@saltus.bm).

## Status of CESI Accreditation

by Malcolm Durrant

The process of acquiring accreditation through the Canadian Educational Standards Institute (CESI) continues to gain momentum, with the visit of the CESI team scheduled for February 2008.

For those of you who are unaware of the procedure, The Institute provides evaluation and accreditation of a school's overall programme. Schools are evaluated in terms of their own statement of philosophy, purposes, and objectives, and in terms of the Institute's Standards for Accreditation of Schools which include: Purposes and Objectives, Values, Discipline and Extra-Curriculum, Academic Programme, School Organisation and Administration, Personnel, School and Community, Admissions, Governance, Financial Management and Physical Plant.

Although particular programmes and emphases vary from one institution to another, in all CESI accredited schools education is viewed in the broad sense as encompassing the intellectual, moral and emotional development of each student. The first step in the process is for the school to produce a self-evaluation, stating where it currently stands with regard to each of the CESI Standards. This self-evaluation is well underway at Saltus. Chairpersons were appointed for each of the Standards and charged with the responsibility of consulting as broad a section of the School community as is feasible in the compilation of the report. The scope of this consultation will naturally vary depending upon the Standard under review, but already staff, students, parents, trustees, alumni, and other friends of Saltus have been approached.

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## Status of CESI *continued*

To gain some insight into the accreditation process, the Headmaster and I were asked to be part of the CESI team which went to re-accredit Trinity College School in Canada in October. We were able to confirm that it is indeed a very rigorous and intense period (normally from Sunday until Wednesday lunchtimes) of review and reflection. Each member of the team is assigned specific responsibilities and the team as a whole comes together on numerous occasions to share views and opinions. At the end of the process, a decision is reached on the recommendation to be made to the CESI Board regarding accreditation, and a comprehensive report is prepared along with recommendations, where appropriate, for the school to act upon.

A recent CESI newsletter stated that the strength of the Accreditation process is that it ensures that member schools are living in a culture of continuous improvement, of "discussion... rethinking...and moving forward." Engaging in such a process, will only serve to make our already good school even better.

### YOU ARE INVITED TO VIEW

#### "Understanding Learning Disabilities: How Difficult Can This Be?"

Saltus parents, especially those whose children have learning differences, are invited to the Centre for Learning to view and discuss the film **Understanding Learning Disabilities: How Difficult Can This Be?** The F.A.T. City Workshop. There will be two showings: **April 25th noon to 2.00 p.m.** and **May 16th at 6.00 p.m.** How does it feel to be dyslexic? What is a visual processing disorder and how does it have an impact in class? How can parents, teachers and the students themselves better understand their learning differences? This film explains that "fair" does not mean every child gets the same treatment, but that every child gets what he/she needs. Please email Laura Lee at [llee@saltus.bm](mailto:llee@saltus.bm) or call 292-6177 ext. 6281 if you plan to attend.

## The Centre for Learning: first 100 days

by Dr. Judith Landsberg

The first half of this year has been filled with activity as new programmes were put in place, old programmes reassessed, and special initiatives launched. In November, we offered a Readak study skills course to students. This is a well-regarded independent programme which students attend outside class time. Topics included: speed reading (with comprehension), note taking, plus study and test taking techniques. More than 80 students from S7 through SGY attended the course (a record for Readak) as did some teachers and Centre for Learning staff.

We are offering **maths** and **writing extension** classes for one hour a week from S3 (maths only) to S7 (writing only). Based on advice from other centres and our experience last year, these classes are for students who are performing at roughly the 95th percentile. The classes aim to provide instruction two to three grades ahead of the general classes. Centre for Learning staff, Laura Lee and Cynthia Adams, are also working with teachers to extend the work they provide in the classroom.

The **writing extension** class is designed to help students to communicate better and to challenge them to use the writing process to analyse and extend their ideas. **Laura Lee** has been using a programme called "Step up to Writing" as the framework for these classes, and is helping Junior Department teachers apply these ideas in the classroom. This has been so successful that the School sent Laura to become certified as a "Step up to Writing Trainer" and she held her first training session with 31 Junior and Cavendish staff on April 14. Laura will work with the new Primary Director of Studies and staff to introduce this programme into all Primary classes next year.



Laura Lee conducts "Step up to Writing" workshop for staff

With assistance from parents, **Cynthia Adams** started the **Math Explorer Club** in the Junior Department last year. This club aims to provide fun activities for S4 to S7 students including ways of looking at maths from a new angle and students are working towards the Math Olympiad in April.

Just over a year ago, **Milton Richardson** came aboard as a consultant **Behavioural Therapist** to provide support for students who have trouble controlling their behaviour. Milton is well known in Bermuda: he taught in local schools for eight years, formed a club in 1995 to foster respect and responsibility in young men ages 10 to 21, and was an Educational Therapist for the Ministry of Education and Development. In November, he received his re-certification in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention from Cornell University. He provides support to students, parents and teachers. His philosophy is that every child is capable of appropriate behaviour -- when they are feeling supported, have appropriate reminders and reinforcements in class, and are provided with lots of positive feedback.



From left: Cynthia Adams, Milton Richardson and Laura Lee

The Centre for Learning is starting to focus on tracking student progress over time. Saltus has always monitored student progress in a particular year; however, we are now establishing a system of tracking from year to year to identify and support the learning needs of individual students. We will also provide teachers with support for the diversity of learning styles and educational needs found among their students and are setting up a Resource Room. We aim to promote a learning environment in the School that not only accommodates and excites all learners, but also teaches children how to learn.

## Inaugural SGY 1 Tour of UK Universities

by Jon Beard

The weekend before the Spring break, a group of 24 students in SGY 1 left for a tour of English universities.

The SGY programme has a long tradition of visiting Canadian universities as a group, but this is the first such venture to the UK. They visited nine universities: Southampton, Exeter, Bristol, Gloucestershire, Warwick, Loughborough, Reading, Kingston, and Roehampton. These universities vary in student population, type of campus, and particular strengths.

The Canadian trip has proven to be an excellent way of helping students to make decisions, with their peers and their counselors, about this next big step in their education. The School hopes that the UK trip will prove to be of similar assistance. Three students from two other schools who had heard of the trip asked to come along to help them better make a decision on which type of university best suited them.

## Primary Years Staff to Attend Summer School in UK

Fourteen staff from the Primary Years will be attending the Educational Development Association's Summer School in Cambridge, England, this July. The week's residential programme will cover a variety of courses appropriate for that age group, including Generic Skills for Primary Headship, Heading for Management, The Management of Behaviour, The Foundation Years, Key Stage 1 Curriculum, Key Stage 2 Curriculum, Managing Special Needs and Inclusion, Managing Assessment and Improving Learning, and IT in the Primary Years.

This considerable investment in Professional Development is considered particularly relevant in the light of our structural change at the Primary level and is also seen as an important exercise in bringing the staff of what are currently two separate departments together to create one, unified Primary team.

Staff scheduled to attend are: Susan Furr, Jennie Beard, Shelly Sayers, Tracy Renaud, Vicki Lightbourn, Kathy Kawaley, Sharon Simmons, Nicole Panchaud, Liz Dowdell, Rosie Doughty, Jan Shaw, Nichola Cunha, Tina Selley, and Felicity Lawrence.

### "Heads Up" Saltus Grammar School

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## Highlights:

- S10 **Blake Sonnenfeld** named Youth Tourism Minister
- SGY Head Boy **Adam Kiki-Charles** was named Outstanding Teen, **Caty Luckhurst** shared the Sports Award and **Jashun Bean** received an award for Community Service
- S6 **Courtney Barbosa** received "Young Citizen Award" at the Universal Day of The Child Young Citizen Awards Luncheon
- Saltus students placed 6th worldwide in World Maths Day competition
- **Saltus Island Project** secured an additional two years of funding from OTEP Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- S7 **Alexander Davis** shaved his head to raise funds while Senior students raised \$1,000 and Cavendish \$970.50 for **St. Baldrick's** a charity which aids children afflicted with cancer.
- S11 **Sasha Slayton** and S9 **Christian Slayton** were among Bermuda's representatives at the UN International School Conference on Global Warming.
- Several S7s had their poems selected for publication *2007: A Poetry Odyssey Global Verses* to be published in the UK at the end of April

Fun! Fun! Fun!  
at the

Saltus Assoc.  
PTA Street Fair

Sat., April 28th

12 to 5 p.m.

saltusassoc@saltus.bm